PLANTING IDEAS • BEAUTIFUL GARDENS • EXPERT ADVICE

GARDENS ILLUSTRATED

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SMALL GARDENS

Making the most of a limited space

HOW TO DESIGN

a family garden

WITH FLAIR

Grow the best

lavender, crocosmia and scented pelargoniums

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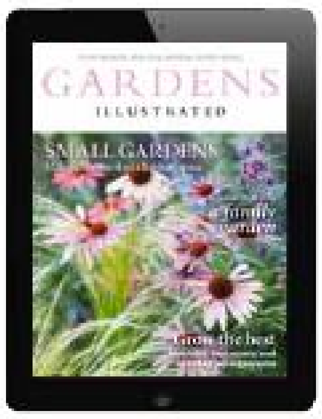
editor's letter

Small gardens are tricky to get right. Creating an enjoyable atmosphere and making the most of limited space requires careful planning and ruthless editing. It's not only what you decide to include but what you decide to take out that counts. For this issue we've tracked down four diverse and carefully designed spaces to inspire you, and have included plenty of tips and insights from the garden makers themselves.

On an entirely different scale, Arabella Lennox-Boyd's design for a family garden in Sussex runs to three acres. The challenge here was to accommodate the needs of both adults and children, as well as to ensure the garden celebrated the beauty of the surrounding landscape. Looking over your garden fence for inspiration is the subject of Annie Guilfoyle's Design Ideas feature, in which she recommends referencing local materials, plants and shapes to ensure a cohesive look. We also offer lots of planting inspiration this month, with advice from specialist growers of lavender, crocosmia and scented pelargoniums. Scented pelargoniums (or, as a friend of mine calls them, pegarloniums) are quite addictive. Whether it's the array of scents, the tactile quality of their leaves or just the prettiness of the plants themselves, once you've fallen for one, you'll inevitably be sniffing out more. Just make sure you've enough space for a collection before it gets out of control.

I hope you enjoy the issue.

Juliet



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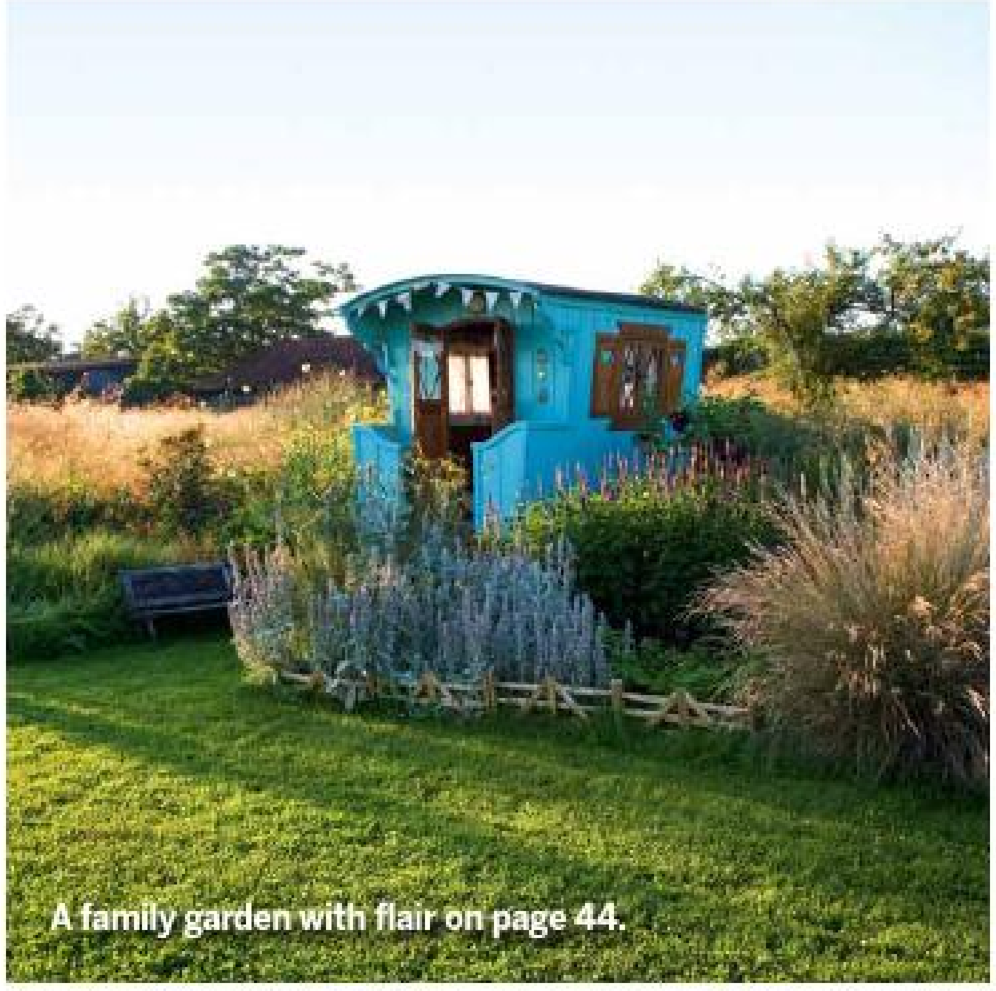

A family garden with flair on page 44.

The best scented pelargoniums, on page 54.

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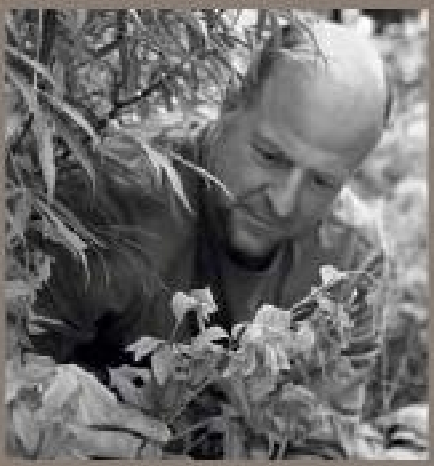

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JANE SEBIRE, JASON INGRAM

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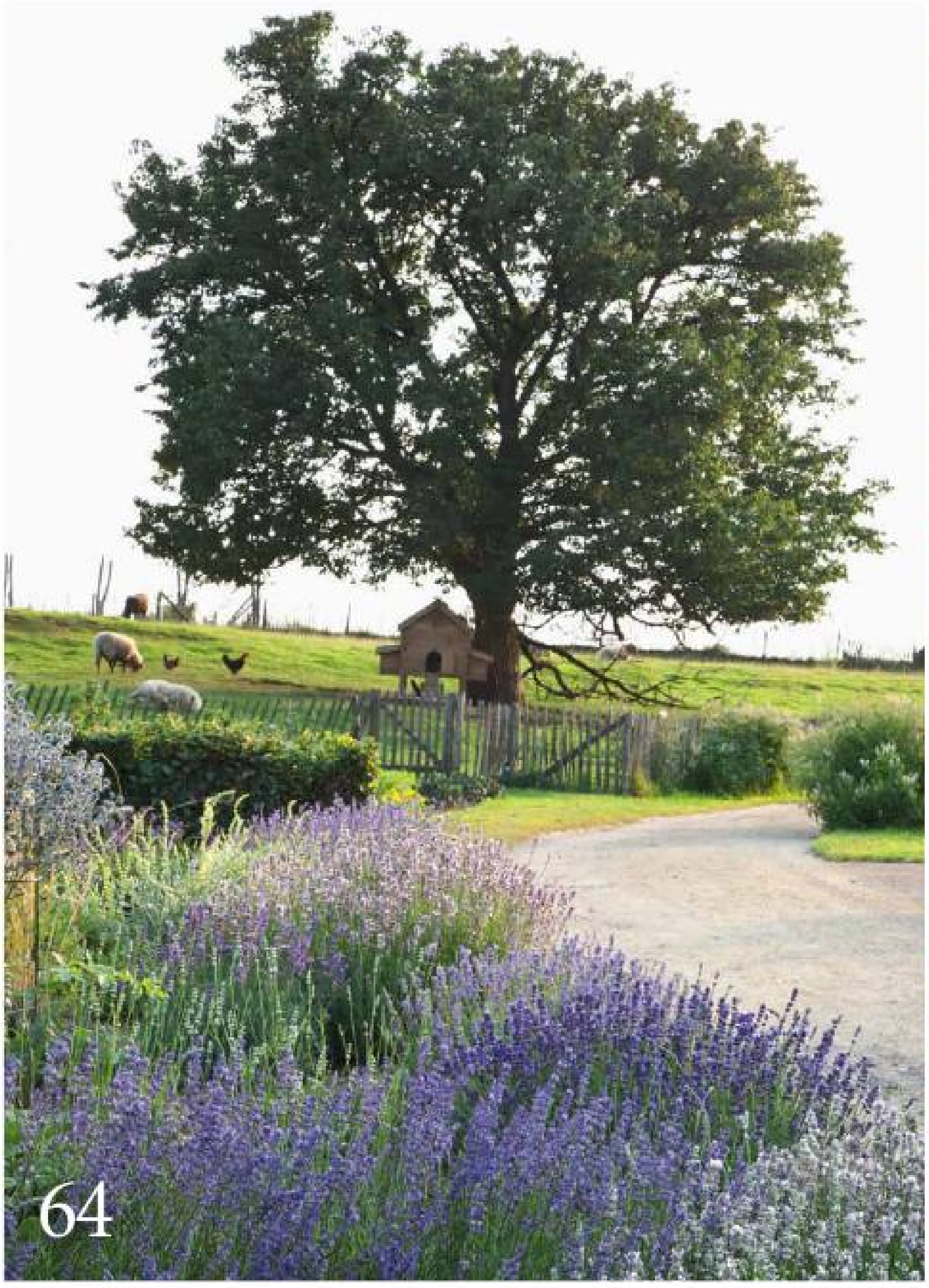

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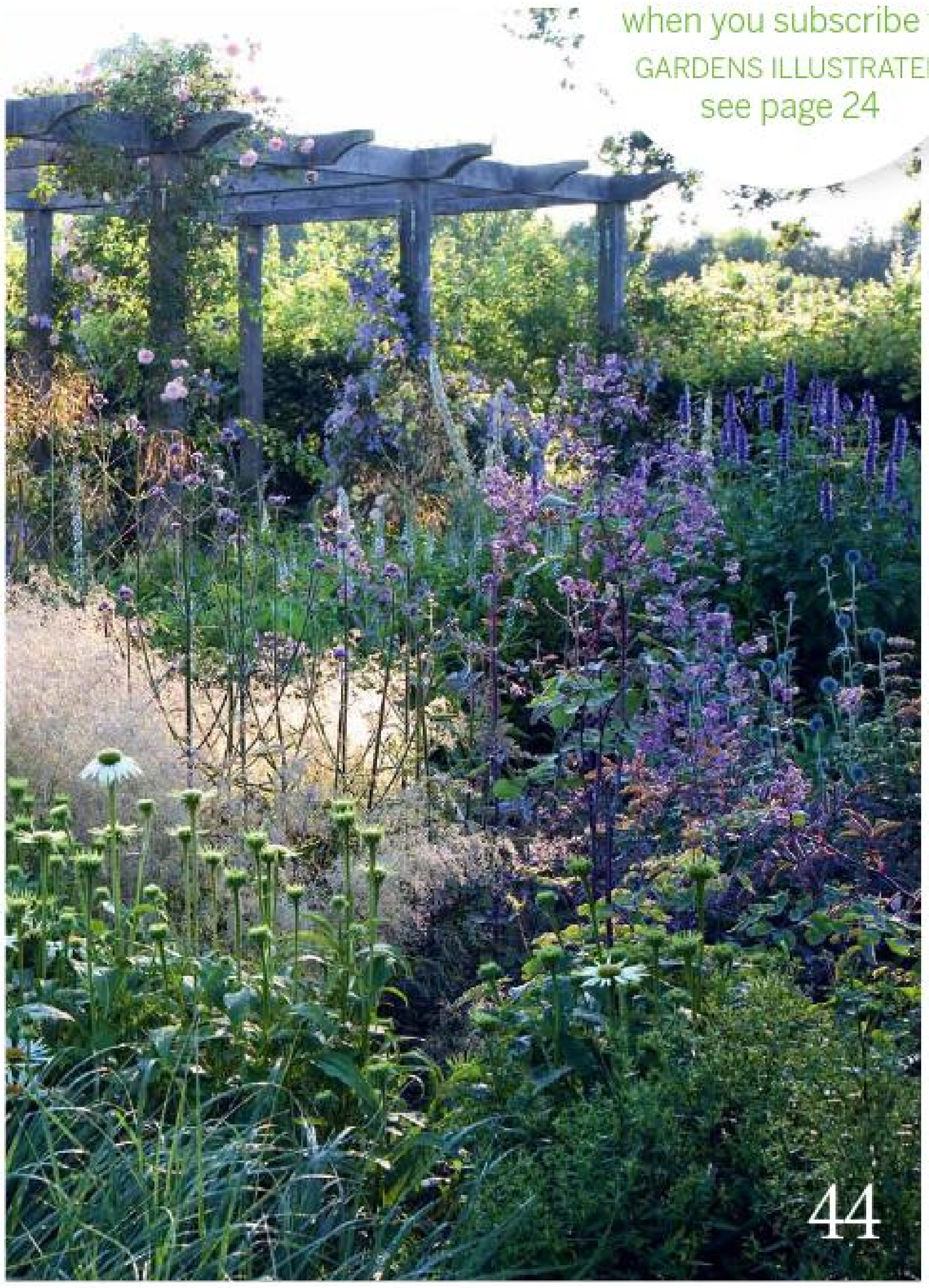

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- **Free one month trial** when you subscribe – see page 24
- Offers on scented pelargoniums and practical gardening essentials – see page 110

contributors

JANE SEBIRE

Jane has been a photographer for 25 years, initially working in portraits, but nowadays she enjoys travelling the country photographing gardens. On page 44 you can see the results of her visit to a West Sussex family garden that is both beautiful and practical .

"I thought the light in this garden was wonderful beyond all my expectations. And it made my job so easy!"

TIM RICHARDSON

Tim is a garden writer, historian and critic. His latest book is *The New English Garden*. Tim is also the founder-director of the Chelsea Fringe festival and wrote Oxford University's landscape history course. His visit to Deborah Nagan's small garden is detailed on page 32.

"It was proof positive that even small gardens can be pretty intense when designed with flair and intelligence."

JOJO TULLOH

Jojo writes about food and gardens and ways to live now. Her book *The Modern Peasant – Adventures in City Food* has just been published by Chatto & Windus and details the world of independent food producers. On page 40 she visits a Japanese style garden in London.

"It was good to see how ambitious design and thoughtful planting can transform even the smallest of plots."

ELKE BORKOWSKI

A renowned garden photographer for 25 years, Elke works mainly for German magazines and has published several books. She loves pottering in her own country garden in Germany. You can see the results of her visit to Bastin Nursery on page 64.

"Bastin is brimming with perfume, bees and colour. I never expected such a mediterranean spirit in the Netherlands."

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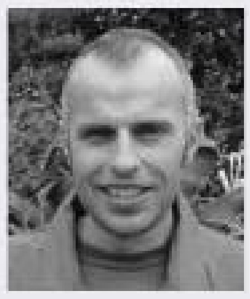
EXCLUSIVE READER DAY

Bulb planting at Great Dixter

Spend a day with Great Dixter's head gardener Fergus Garrett, gathering ideas and advice on bulb planting and combinations to ensure spring starts with a burst of colour



Head gardener Fergus Garrett is an expert plantsman and gardener who continues to garden at Great Dixter in the spirit of innovation for which its late owner Christopher Lloyd was known and loved.

Using the gardens and borders at Great Dixter as inspiration, Fergus Garrett talks through the varied uses of bulbs in the garden. Planting ideas will include: naturalised planting in grass and meadows; using bulbs mixed within permanent border plantings; using bulbs as pocket plantings and creating bulb displays in containers. Fergus will also give advice on how to deal with bulbs after flowering and what to consider when buying your bulbs. There will be practical demonstrations throughout the day, plus the opportunity to buy bulbs from the nursery at a 10 per cent discount.

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Please advise us of any dietary requirements or accessibility queries.

*Calls to this number from a BT landline will cost 10p per minute. Calls from mobiles and other providers may vary. For more details about the day itself call Great Dixter on 01797 252878 or go to www.greatdixter.co.uk/events.htm.
Great Dixter, Northam, Rye, East Sussex TN31 6PH

GREAT DIXTER

DATE

Monday 21 October 2013

HELD AT

Great Dixter, near Hastings
in East Sussex

PROGRAMME

9.45am Arrival and coffee

10am Talk and demonstrations by Fergus Garrett on using bulbs in the garden

12.45pm Champagne Taittinger reception in the Great Hall, followed by lunch

1.45pm Further ideas and demonstrations on bulb planting

4.30pm Tea in the nursery, plus the opportunity to buy bulbs

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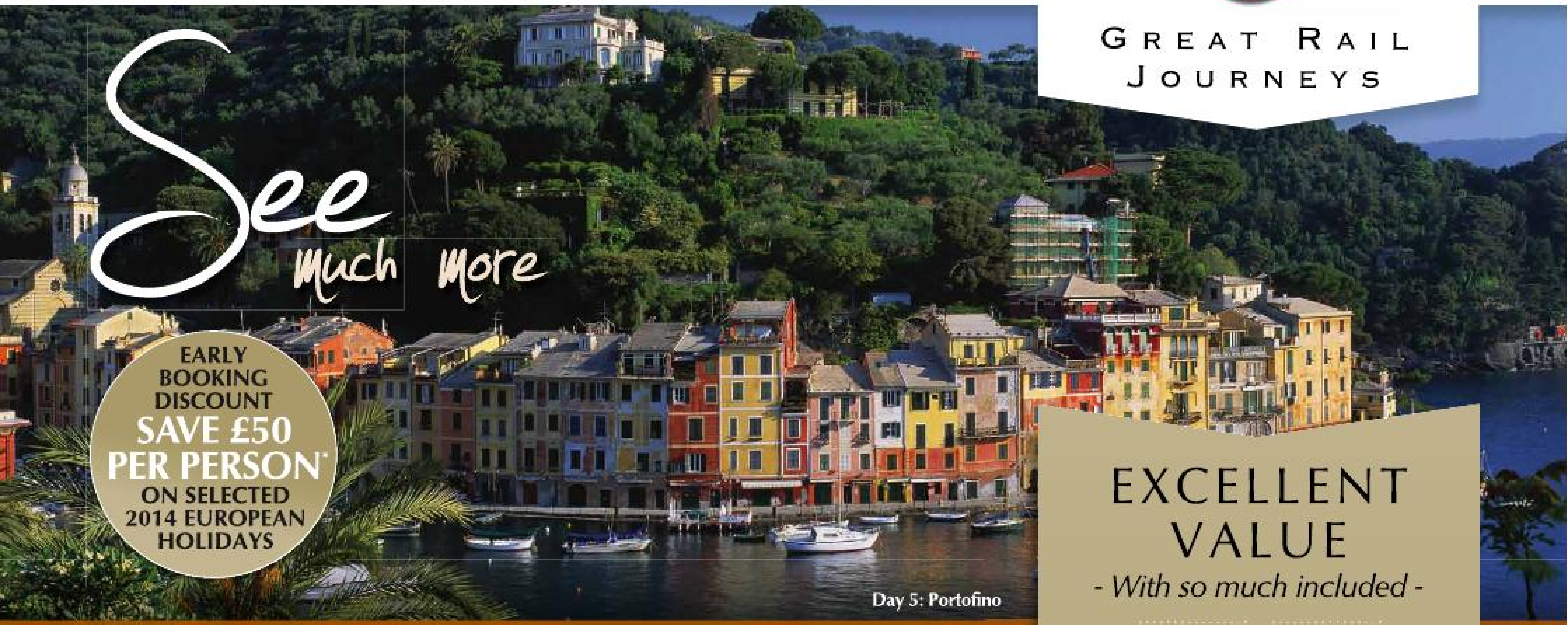
GREAT RAIL JOURNEYS



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Day 5: Portofino and San Fruttuoso. Cruise to the famous resort for lunch, where pastel-painted houses lead down to sleek yachts in the harbour. Continue along the coastline to the Abbey of San Fruttuoso where the bronze Cristo degli Abissi stands on the sea bed, said to protect local divers.

Day 6: A day at leisure. Enjoy a free day, perhaps to visit Genoa, take a boat to Cinque Terre villages or to Santa Margherita Ligure, with an impressive 16th century castle.

Day 7: Pisa and Lucca. Travel to Pisa for a guided tour including the famous leaning tower, medieval Duomo and marble Baptistry then continue to the walled Roman city of Lucca to explore at leisure.

Day 8: Excursion to Camogli. Travel by train to the picturesque fishing village for a guided tour.

Day 9: Turin. Travel by train to Turin for an overnight stay in the historic city.

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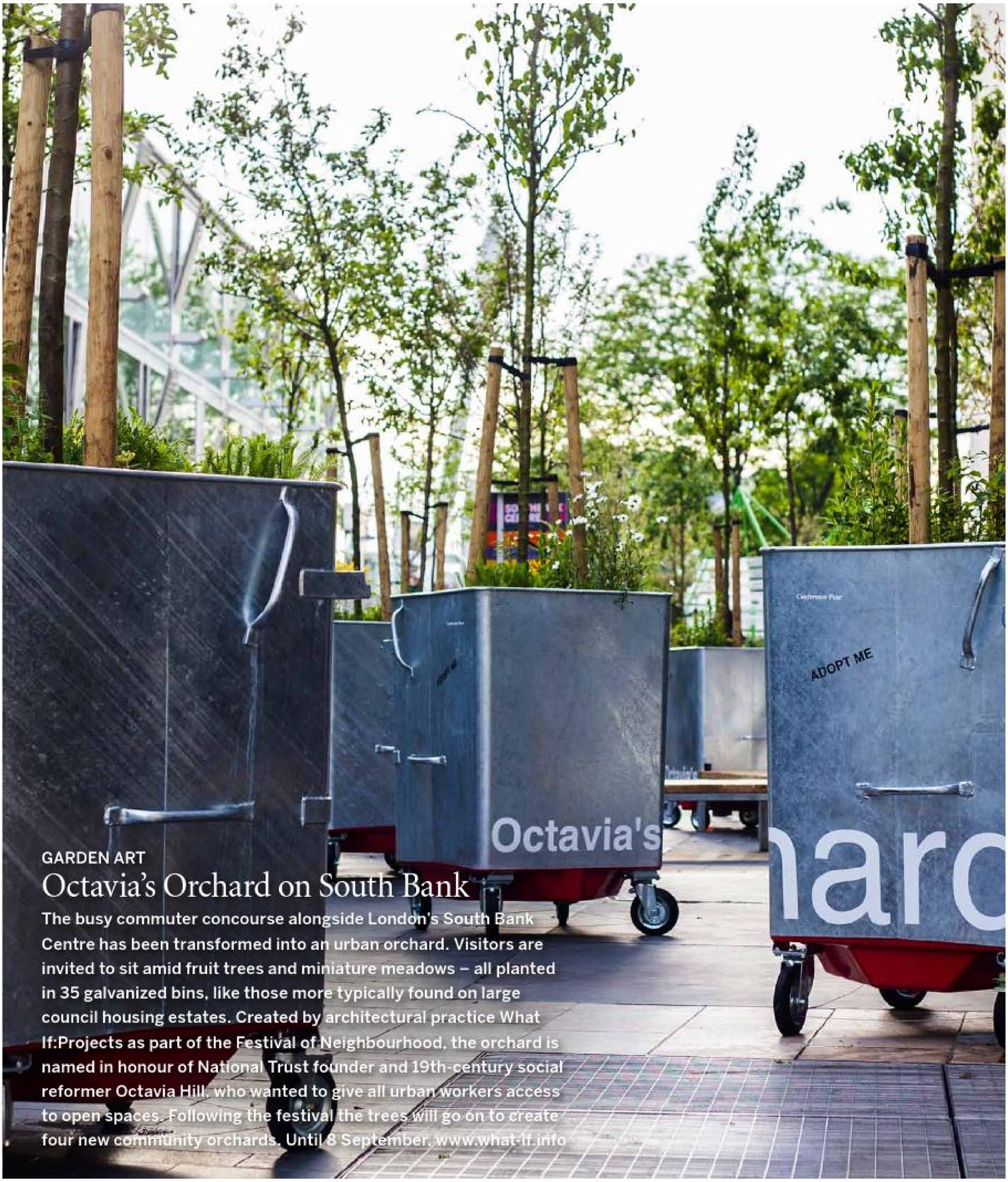
Dig in

News, Gardening talent, Nurseryman's favourites, Gardener's notes & Shopping

NEWS COMPILED BY **SORREL EVERTON**



JO CASTLE

GARDEN ART

Octavia's Orchard on South Bank

The busy commuter concourse alongside London's South Bank Centre has been transformed into an urban orchard. Visitors are invited to sit amid fruit trees and miniature meadows – all planted in 35 galvanized bins, like those more typically found on large council housing estates. Created by architectural practice What If:Projects as part of the Festival of Neighbourhood, the orchard is named in honour of National Trust founder and 19th-century social reformer Octavia Hill, who wanted to give all urban workers access to open spaces. Following the festival the trees will go on to create four new community orchards. Until 8 September. www.what-if.info

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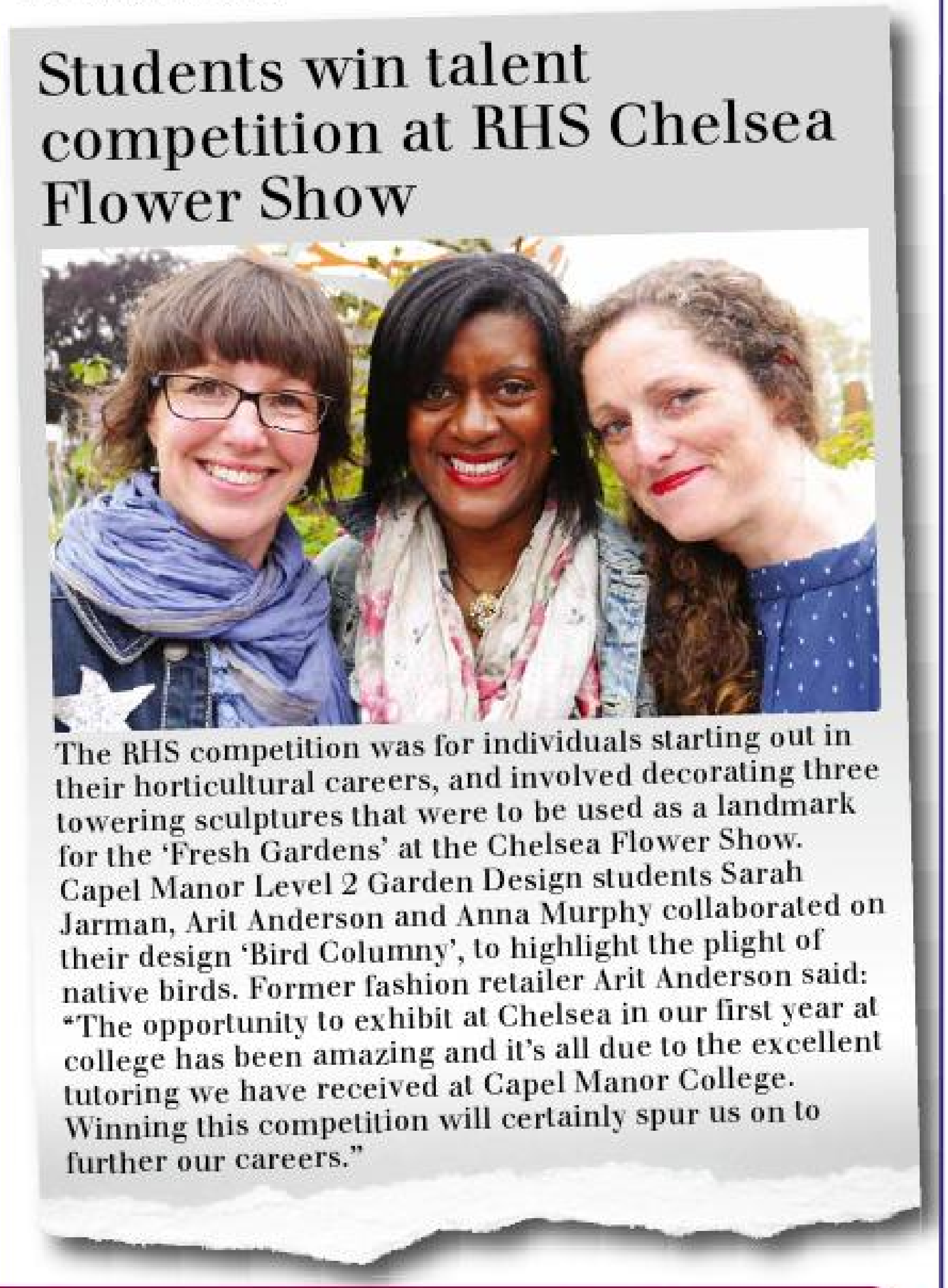

Students win talent competition at RHS Chelsea Flower Show

The RHS competition was for individuals starting out in their horticultural careers, and involved decorating three towering sculptures that were to be used as a landmark for the 'Fresh Gardens' at the Chelsea Flower Show. Capel Manor Level 2 Garden Design students Sarah Jarman, Arit Anderson and Anna Murphy collaborated on their design 'Bird Columny', to highlight the plight of native birds. Former fashion retailer Arit Anderson said: "The opportunity to exhibit at Chelsea in our first year at college has been amazing and it's all due to the excellent tutoring we have received at Capel Manor College. Winning this competition will certainly spur us on to further our careers."

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CAMPAIGN

On the verge

Have you noticed how some of our best wildflower displays are along our road verges? These thin strips of grassland running the length and breadth of the UK are home to over two thirds of all our wildflowers, supporting over 1,000 species, many of them on the 'at risk' list, as well as providing vital food sources for our pollinators. However, you might also have noticed how often these verges get cut down or mown just as the flowers reach their peak. Charity Plantlife wants the public to support their campaign to urge local councils to review maintenance policies so that these precious wildflower habitats can be allowed to flourish. Find out more about the Verges Campaign at www.plantlife.org.uk/roadvergecampaign

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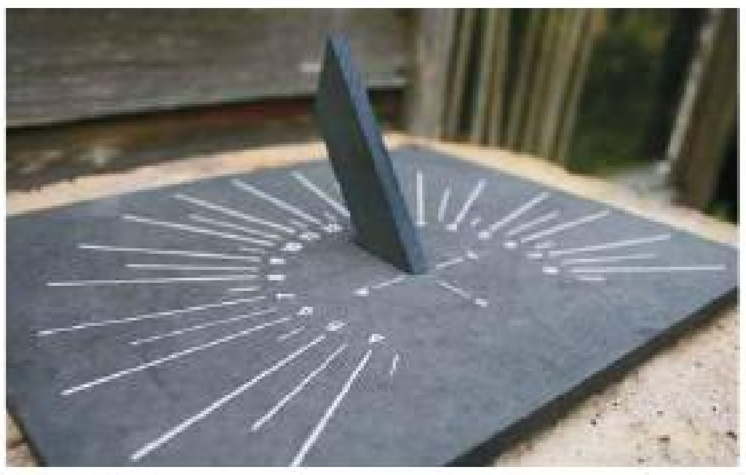

ENVIRONMENT

Recycle and reuse

If you've got a burgeoning collection of unwanted plastic plant pots, you can now drop these off at any Garden Centre Group nursery, or any nursery participating in the Pots to Products scheme. The pots are then collected by product design company A Short Walk for recycling into other useful garden products, including plant holders, labels, outdoor clocks and garden chalk boards. Find out more at www.ashortwalk.com/eco_products_for_the_garden.php

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A twinkle in your eye

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Practical gardening

This simple yet practical garden apron in pale grey is made of 100 per cent linen. It is designed and made in Britain as part of a limited edition range from The Linen Works, £40. Tel 020 7819 7620, www.thelinenworks.co.uk. You will also find other products from The Linen Works stocked by Cowdray Farm Shop in West Sussex www.cowdray.co.uk

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EVENT

Fiery fiesta

Celebrate the sunshine at West Dean's popular Chilli Festival where you'll find stalls, food, music, entertainment and of course plenty of chilli plants. In fact there's over 250 varieties of chilli in West Dean's glasshouses. Plus new for this year, you can camp at the festival and enjoy the party atmosphere as the sun goes down. 9-11 August, www.westdean.org.uk/events

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GROW

A world of gardening

Johnsons Seeds' new range of World Botanic Seeds is inspired by a selection of plants brought back from around the globe by the plant hunters of the 18th and 19th century. The range, which includes 66 different varieties, features garden favourites such as agapanthus and cosmos. Proceeds from sales also go towards helping Plant Heritage's Threatened Plants Appeal, aimed at safeguarding the future range and diversity of garden plants increasingly under threat from changing fashions, disease and mass propagation. Find out more at www.plantheritage.com and www.johnsons-seeds.com

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Diary

Calder at the Castle

- **Calder at the Castle**
First ever outdoor exhibition of large-scale works by sculptor Alexander Calder. Until 26 October. Sudeley Castle, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire GL54 5JD. Tel 01242 602244, www.sudeleycastle.co.uk
- **RHS Garden Hyde Hall Flower Show**
Specialist nurseries, floral displays, Q&A session and the gardens themselves to visit. 1-4 August, 10am-5pm. £7.95 (non RHS members). RHS Garden Hyde Hall, Creephedge Lane, Rettendon, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 8ET. Tel 0845 265 8071, www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/hyde-hall
- **Summer pruning of fruit trees**
Practical demonstration on how to summer prune your fruit trees. 8 August, 1.30-4pm. £25. (This is a partner course to Trained Fruit 5 December). Thornhayes Nursery, St Andrews Wood, Dulford, Cullompton, Devon EX15 2DF. Tel 01884 266746, www.thornhayes-nursery.co.uk
- **Veggie Heaven picnic afternoon**
Family friendly picnic afternoon at University of Oxford Botanic Garden celebrating the height of the growing and harvesting season. Various activities plus get tips and ideas for your own family vegetable garden. 10 August, 1-4pm, free with entry to the gardens £4.50 adults, children free. The University of Oxford Botanic Garden, Rose Lane, Oxford OX1 4AZ. Tel 01865 286690, www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk
- **Organic vegetables at Loseley Park**
Take a tour of the gardens to learn about its history and development, plus pick up advice on growing vegetables organically. Book in advance. 5 August, 6-8pm. £9.95. Loseley Park, Guildford, Surrey GU3 1HS. Tel 01483 405112, www.loseleypark.co.uk
- **Artists' Gardens: Planting Palettes**
Three-day course led by Dr Twigs Way focusing on five European artists from the 19th and 20th centuries and examining the gardens they created, and the relationship between reality and portrayal. 12-14 August, 10am-1pm, £40. Retirement Education Centre (Bedford), 6 Rothsay Gardens, Bedford MK40 3QB. Book in advance by contacting 01234 302203, www.recbedford.co.uk
- **Ludlow Festival of Small Gardens**
Thirty small gardens open throughout the historic market town along with entertainment, food, art and plant sales. 25-26 August 12 noon – 6pm. Ludlow Assembly Rooms, 1 Mill St, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AZ. www.ludlow.org.uk

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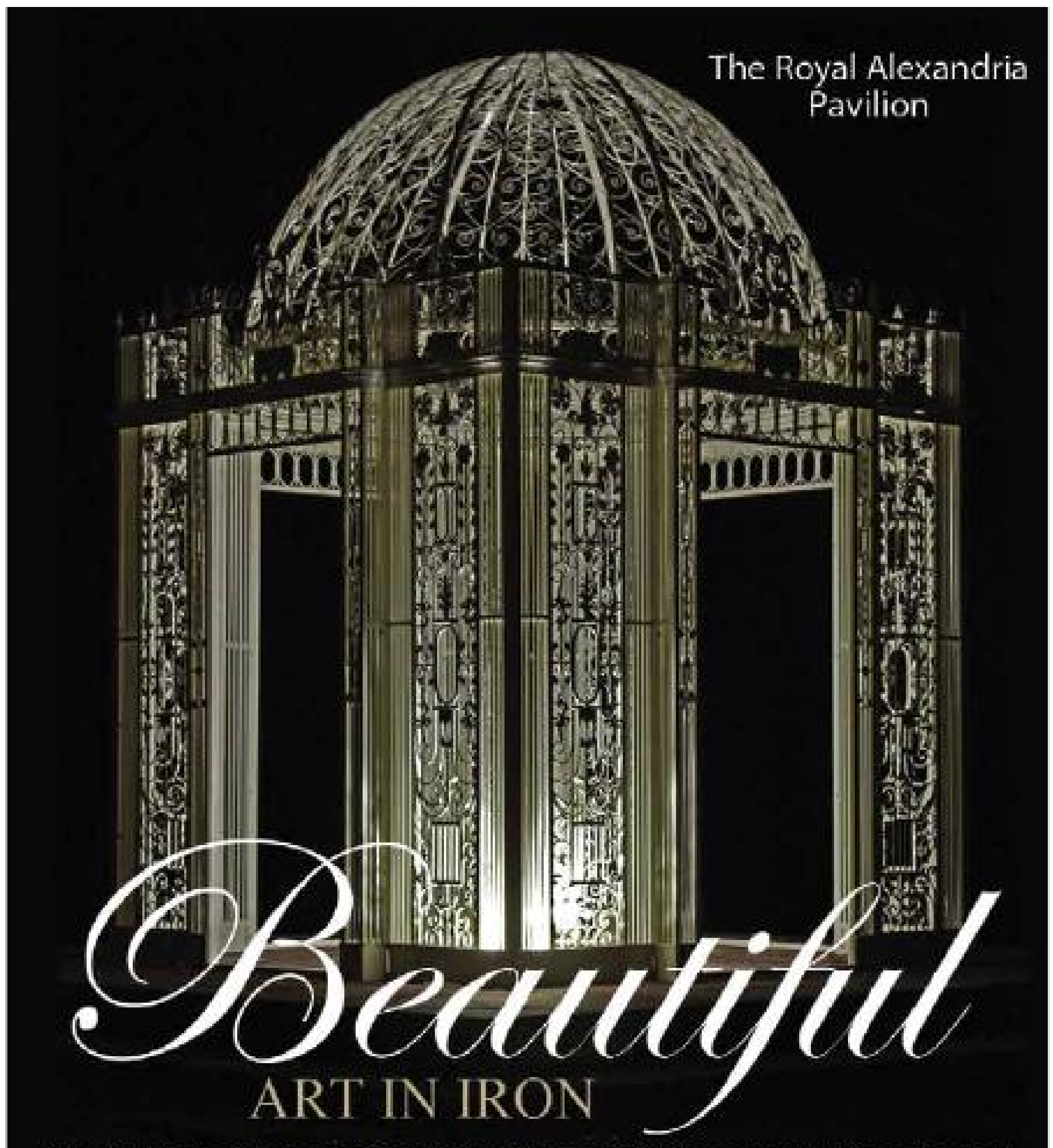

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James English

Now part of the team at Cambridge University Botanic Garden, it was the Historic and Botanic Gardens Bursary Scheme (HBGBS) that launched James' horticultural career

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Earliest gardening memory Pulling a piece of *Bergenia* out of a bed in a new business park development as a child. I took it home and stuck it in the ground despite it having no roots. The clump is still growing in my Dad's garden today.

Favourite garden? Cambridge University Botanic Garden: I love the broad, all encompassing collection there, with examples of almost all types of plants that are garden worthy.

A worthwhile tip for every gardener Learn as many plant names as possible; this is superb knowledge for working within the industry worldwide.

Dream plant destination New Zealand. I am aware of the uniqueness of most of the plants there and would love to see so many of these plants, most of which I am unfamiliar with.

Who would you most like to have tea and cake with in the garden? David Attenborough without a shadow of a doubt. He has totally inspired me from an early age with his many natural history television documentaries.

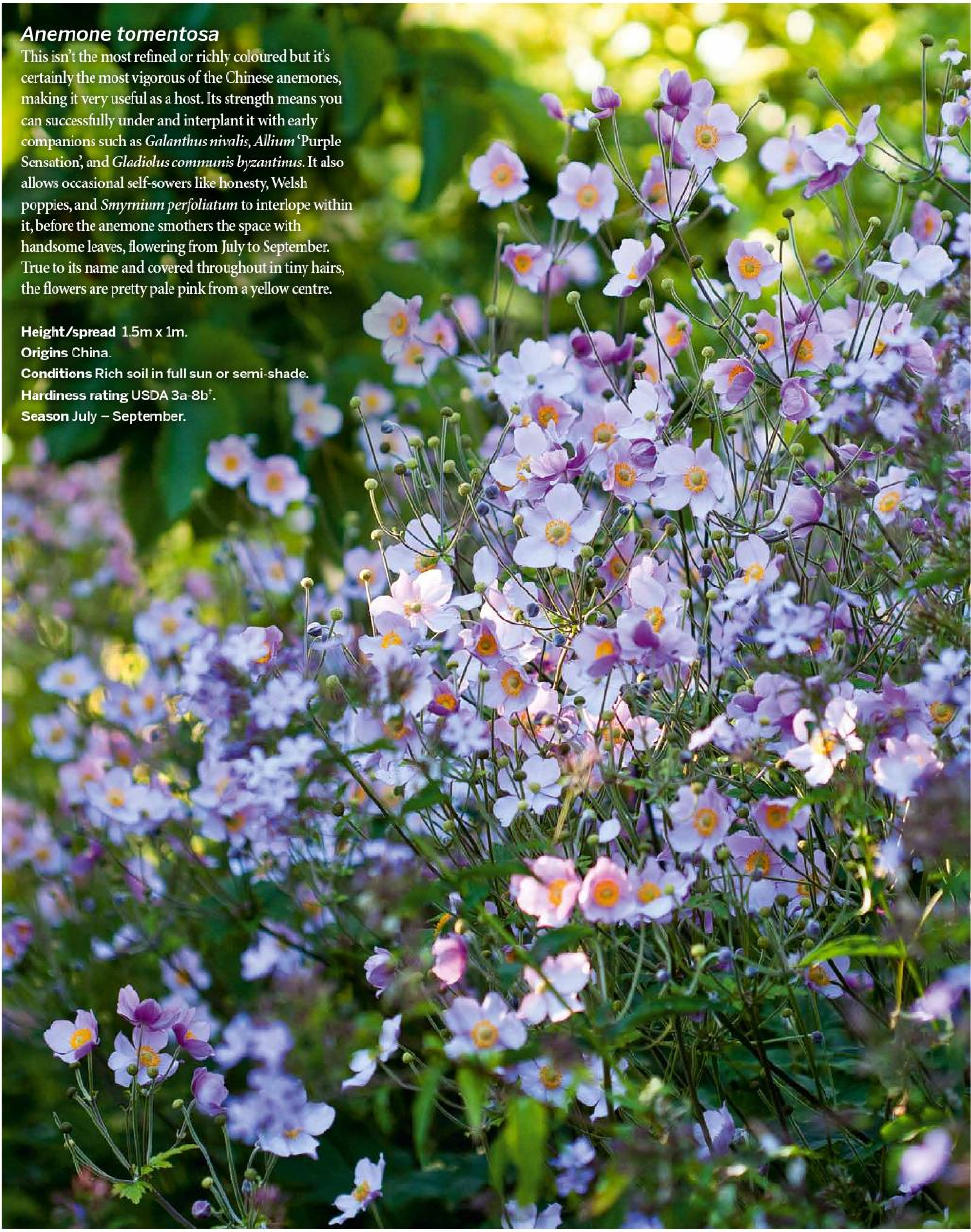
Favourite planting style? Naturalistic. Whether it's prairie planting, meadows or herbaceous borders – I've always loved seeing plants growing naturally, without too much intervention and 'manicuring'.

Unsung hero of the plant world? *Cotoneaster horizontalis* – such an overused 'car park plant', however it really earns its place when well positioned in a garden. Beautifully dense carpets of fragrant white flowers followed by masses of bright red berries – perfect for covering a dry bank where others don't do so well.

Biggest challenge facing gardeners today Probably finding a good enough wage to live on. The money just isn't being made available as yet for gardeners to earn anywhere near what their desk-dwelling counterparts do, despite the high level of skill involved with the job.

Favourite gardening blogs? Andrew Turvey's 'Plant Doctor' blog is great as it keeps me up to date with recent developments at Myddelton House (where I did my HBGBS placement).

Contact email address james.english@live.co.uk



Anemone tomentosa

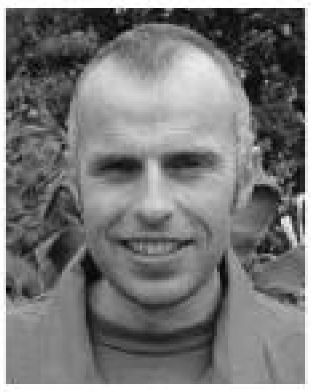
This isn't the most refined or richly coloured but it's certainly the most vigorous of the Chinese anemones, making it very useful as a host. Its strength means you can successfully under and interplant it with early companions such as *Galanthus nivalis*, *Allium* 'Purple Sensation', and *Gladiolus communis byzantinus*. It also allows occasional self-sowers like honesty, Welsh poppies, and *Smyrnium perfoliatum* to interlope within it, before the anemone smothers the space with handsome leaves, flowering from July to September. True to its name and covered throughout in tiny hairs, the flowers are pretty pale pink from a yellow centre.

Height/spread 1.5m x 1m.
Origins China.
Conditions Rich soil in full sun or semi-shade.
Hardiness rating USDA 3a-8b[†].
Season July – September.

August plants

Your late-summer palette can look better than ever with these recommendations from Great Dixter's head gardener

WORDS **FERGUS GARRETT** PHOTOGRAPHS **SHARON PEARSON**

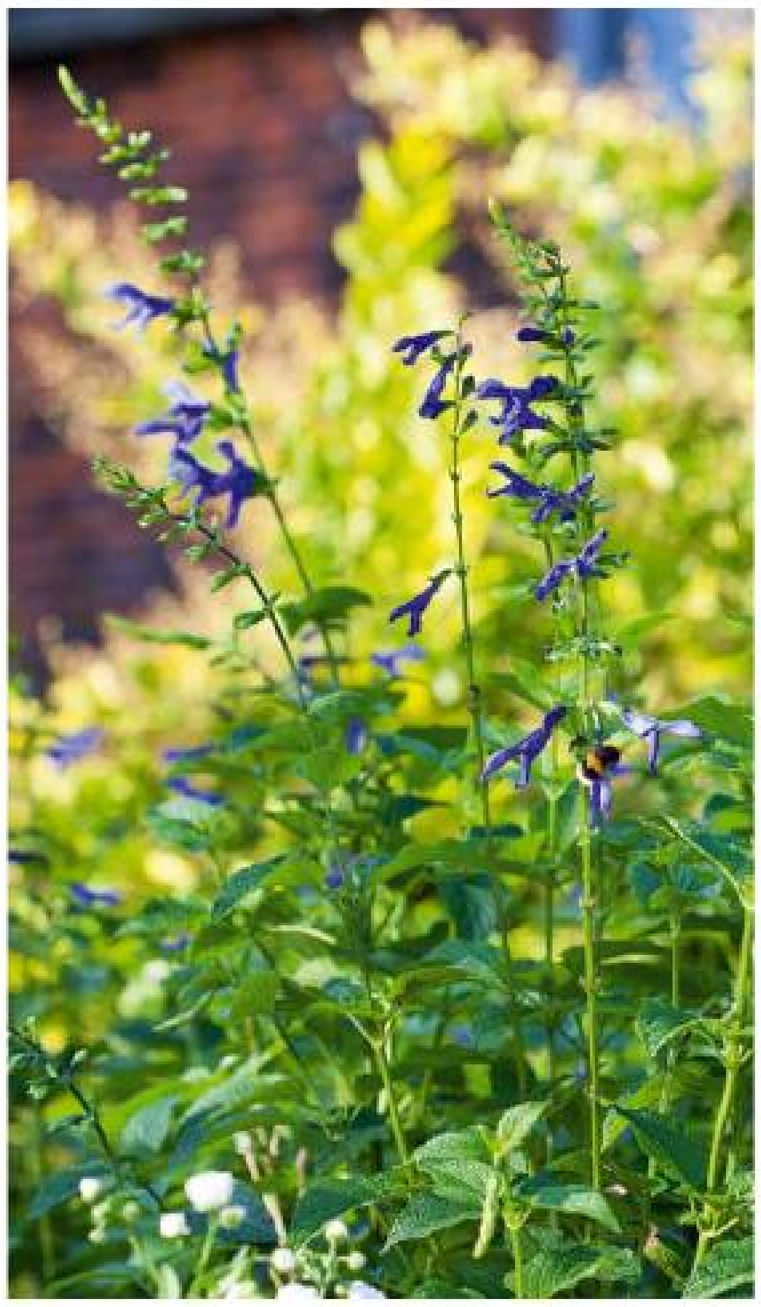


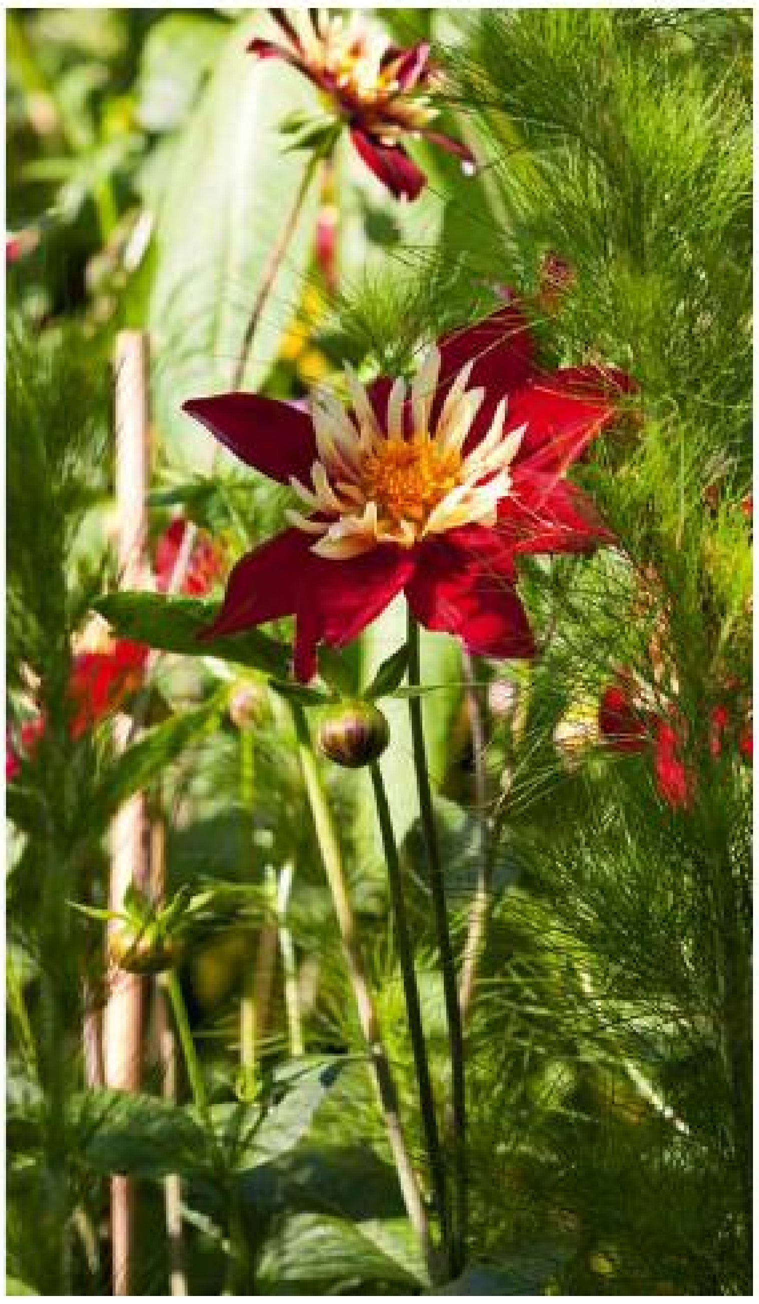
Fergus Garrett is a plantsman and head gardener at Great Dixter in East Sussex. He also lectures, writes and serves on Royal Horticultural Society committees

Salvia guaranitica 'Blue Enigma'

Hardy in our part of the world, this salvia is an invaluable injection of blue all summer long. Upright, sturdy and self-supporting. Has square stems and serrated, fresh-green, ovate, aromatic leaves with deep purple-blue, double-lipped flowers held on prominent green calyxes, each with a protruding snake's tongue of female parts. The male parts are hidden within the keeled lower labia of each flower. The flowers are held on long terminal spikes and continue over a long period as the plant continues to flower on axillary side branches.

Height/spread 2m x 80cm. AGM*.
Origins A wide section of South America.
Conditions Moist, well-drained soil, full sun.
Hardiness rating USDA 9a-11.
Season July – October



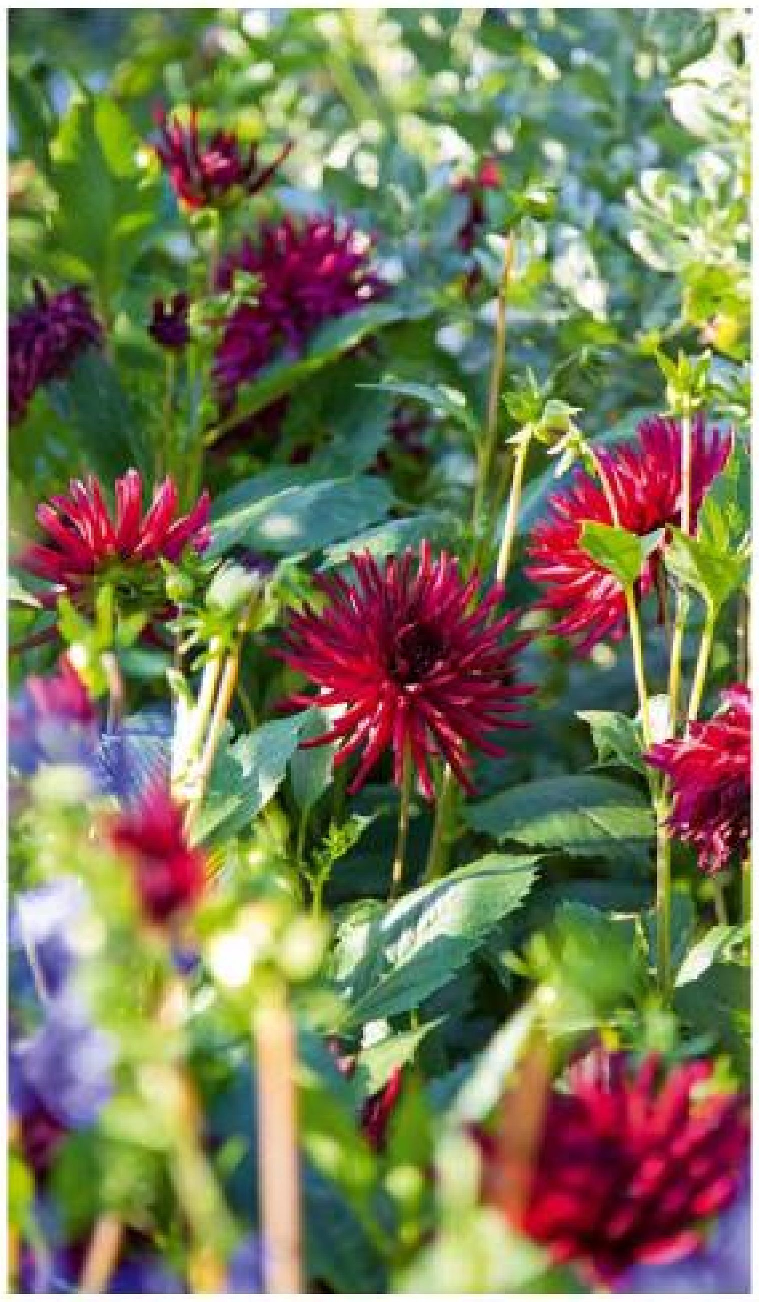


Dahlia 'Chimborazo'

Fittingly named after an Ecuadorian volcano, this is a tall and graceful collarette dahlia with exotic bi-coloured flowers made up of discs of broad outer ray petals, rich carmine red in colour, and elegantly twisted at the tip. These are brought blazingly to life with an inner collar of numerous smaller, vibrant yellow rays. The effect is light but striking, with the flowers carried at and above head height on naked slender stems. Soaring well above many of its border companions, the dazzling heads wave gently and elegantly in the slightest breeze.

Height/spread 2m x 70cm.
Origins Bred in 1959 by J Crutchfield.
Conditions Good soil and full sun.
Season July to first frosts.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society
[†]Hardiness ratings given where available



Dahlia 'Hillcrest Royal'

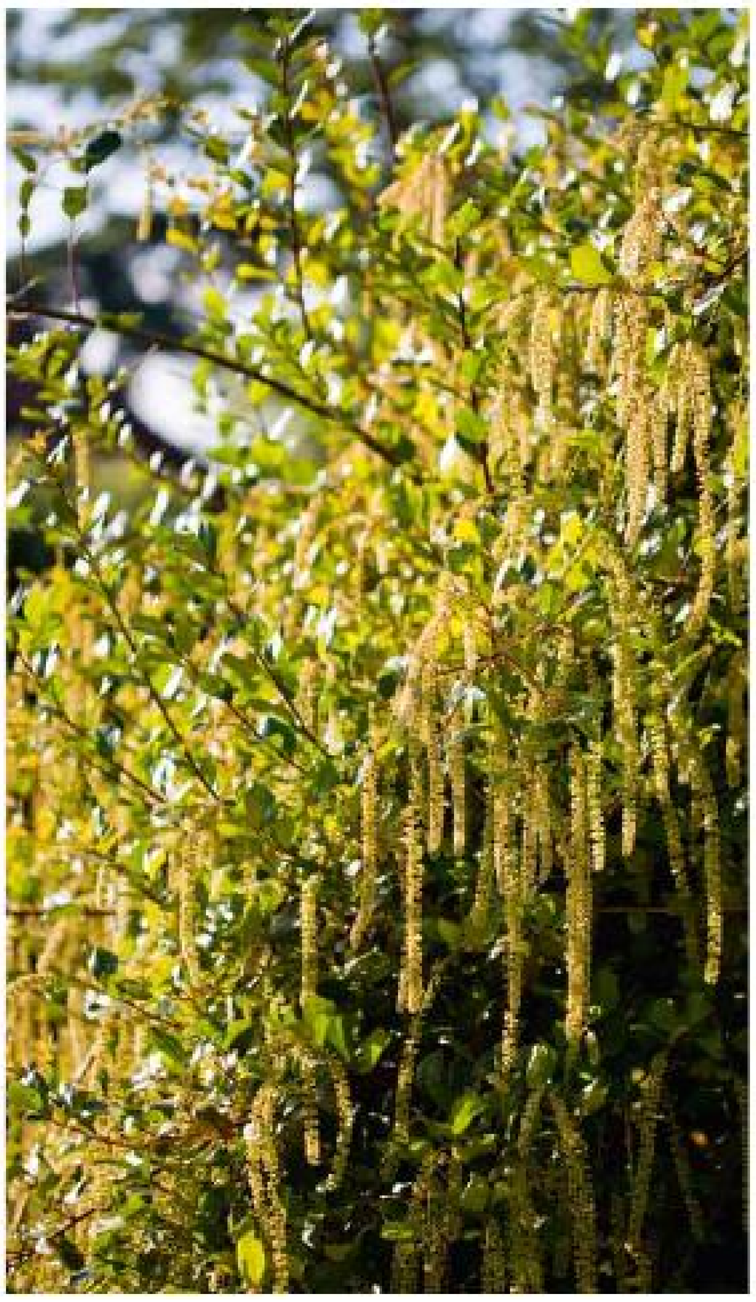
This is one of the most exciting and luxurious of all dahlias. A green-leaved, medium cactus with voluptuous flowers fused in deep rich magenta produced over a long period on strong stems. The centre of each flower glows neon purple as the spiky petals unfurl. Be careful as inferior interlopers come under the same name – these are lighter and brash pink and don't have the depth of the quality of the original. Christopher Lloyd beautifully interplanted 'Hillcrest Royal' with white variegated *Arundo donax* var. *versicolor*. A faultless dahlia for colour lovers.

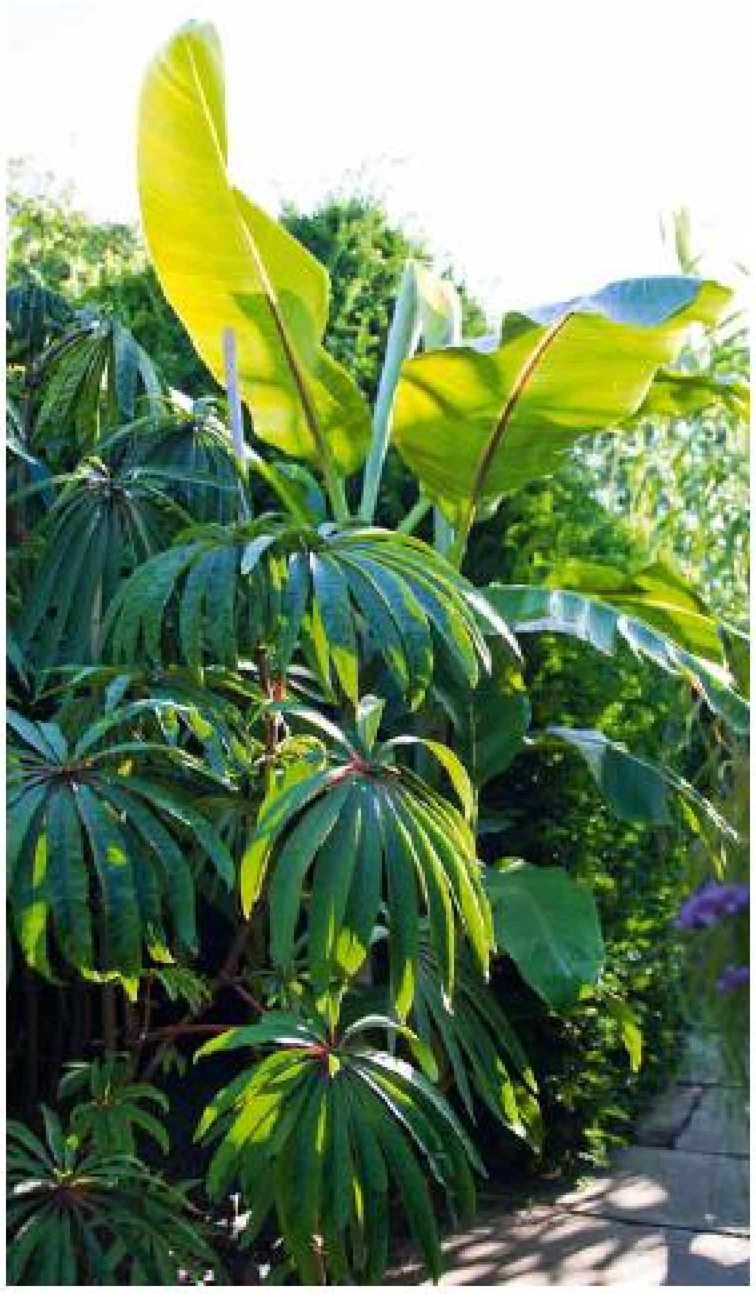
Height/spread 1.5m x 70cm. AGM.
Origins Bred by Les Jackson.
Conditions Moist, well-drained soil, full sun.
Hardiness rating RHS H3.
Season July – October

Itea ilicifolia

A lax medium-sized evergreen shrub with long rangy stems decorated with soft textured, glossy green spiny leaves. When in flower it makes an impressive sight, the bush heavily laden with long dangling racemes clustered with small greenish white flowers, scenting the air with sweet honey. The perfume is particularly strong at night, attracting moths and many other night flying insects – an ideal place to set up a strong light and see what turns up. Performs best when given a warm wall, making a comfortable billowing evergreen mass.

Height/spread 3m x 2.5m. AGM.
Origins Native of western China.
Conditions Moist, well-drained soil and a warm, sheltered sunny site
Hardiness rating RHS H3, USDA 4a-9b.
Season August.





Begonia luxurians

Sturdy upright canes supporting a zig-zag of alternating side branches, each with large, finely dissected palmate leaves comprising a dozen or so thin drooping fingers. The whole plant is rippled with hairs, and has reddish undertones to the stems and the undersides of leaves. The overall effect is not too dissimilar to a herbaceous palm tree – plants in our Exotic Garden are often mistaken for miniature palms. Loose clusters of cream flowers emerge from a lacework of small globular buds.

Height/spread 2m x 1m (3m plus in its native land). AGM.
Origins Rainforests of Brazil.
Conditions Moist, well-drained soil in dappled shade. Needs a hothouse in winter.
Hardiness rating USDA 10a-11.
Season Year-round as a foliage plant.

Places to visit

Fergus shares some of his favourite places to see plants at their best.

Dahlia Trials at the RHS gardens Wisley, Surrey. There are 86 dahlias in this year's RHS Trial. This is an active trial with dozens of dahlias growing side by side, and visitors are invited to give their views on which they consider are the best. Voting papers will be available, and those with the greatest number of votes will become the 'People's Choice'. Don't visit once but several times, if you can, up until October.

ROBERT BIRD / ALAMY

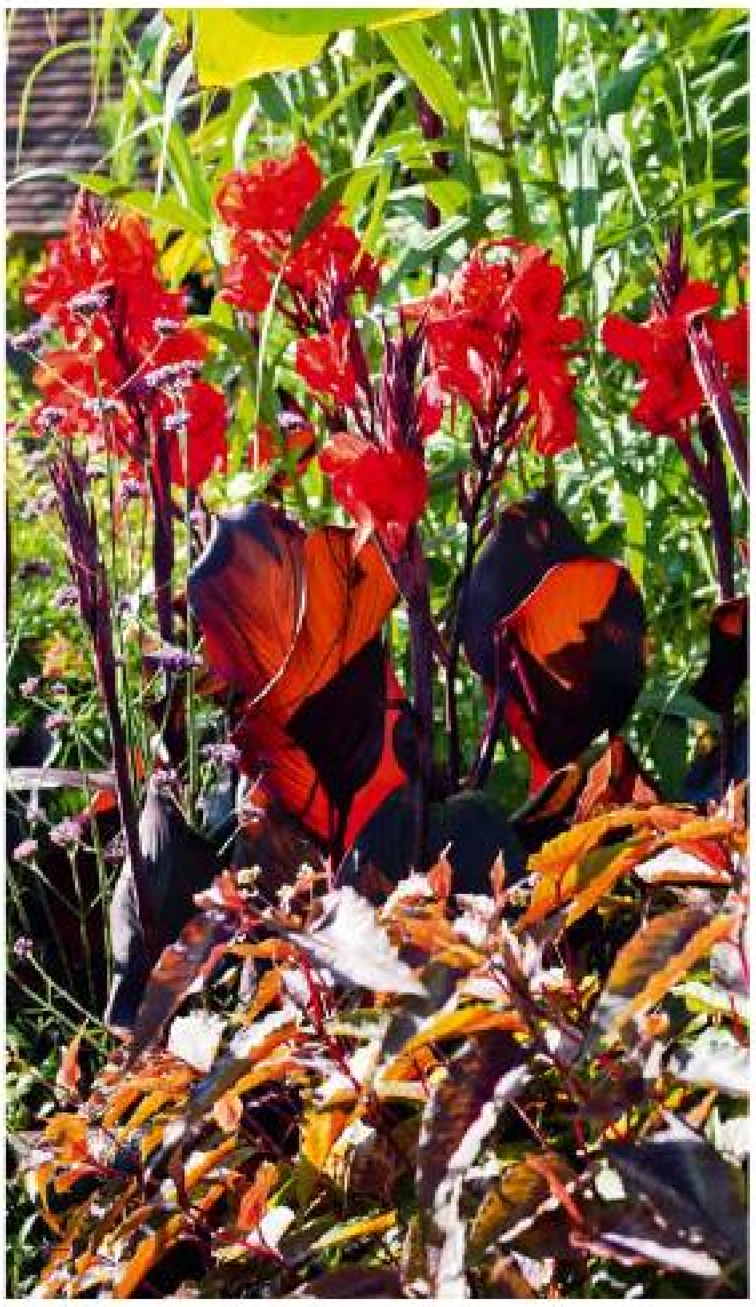
Dahlias at Wisley

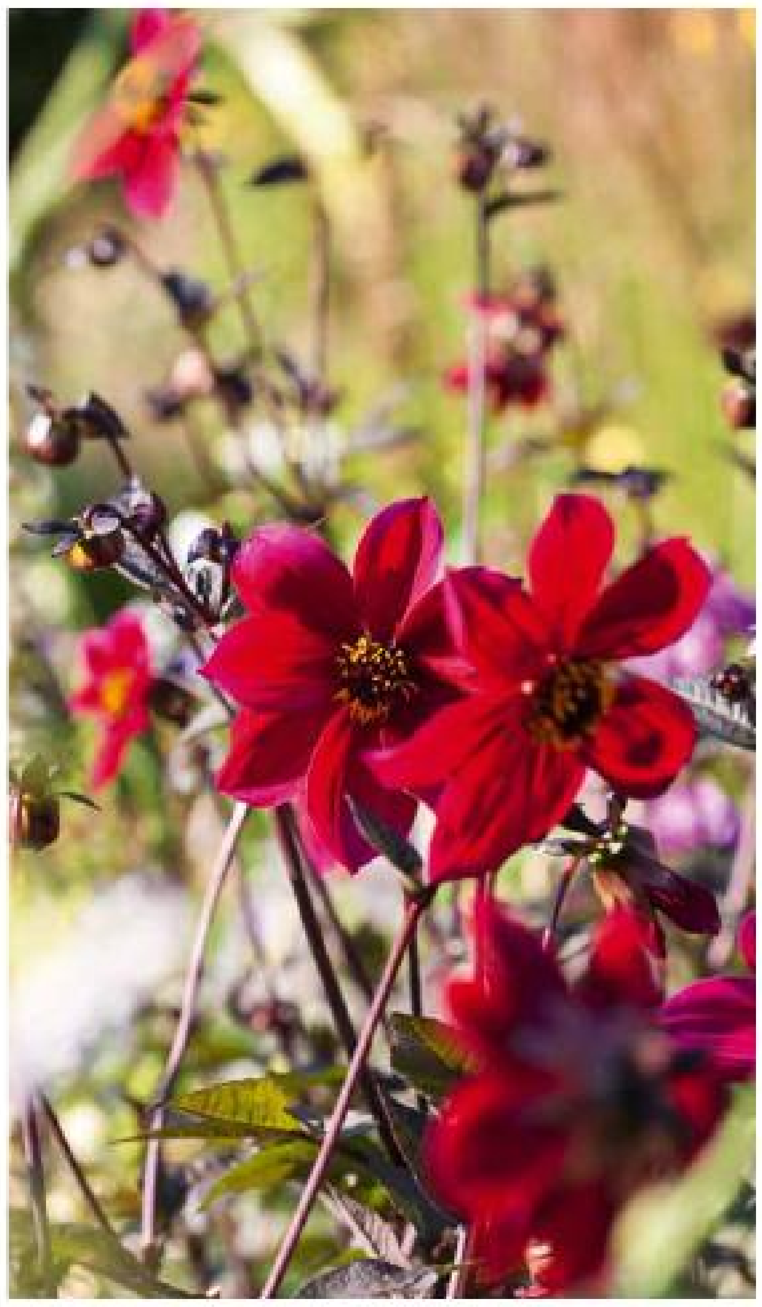
Regional Dahlia shows throughout the month of August. Visit the show calendar on the National Dahlia Society's website at www.dahlia-nds.co.uk to see a busy calendar of flower shows including the Leeds Flower Show (3-4 August), Heald Green Horticultural Society

Canna 'General Eisenhower'

A sumptuous canna with spectacular, large oval, wide and plump, deep reddish-brown leaves, rippled with muscles, curled and twisted making a compact structure as solid as a piece of sculpture. Large rich reddish-orange flowers follow, held on the top of stems resembling flamboyant handkerchiefs glowing like red hot beacons. Leaves glisten in strong sunshine. Plants are slow to increase and are best brought on under glass and not planted out until night temperatures are around 10°C or higher.

Height/spread 1.5m x 50cm. AGM.
Origins May be synonymous with *Canna* 'La France', introduced by Carl Sprenger.
Conditions Rich moist soil in full sun.
Hardiness rating RHS H3, USDA 7b-11.
Season July – October





Dahlia coccinea 'Mary Keen'

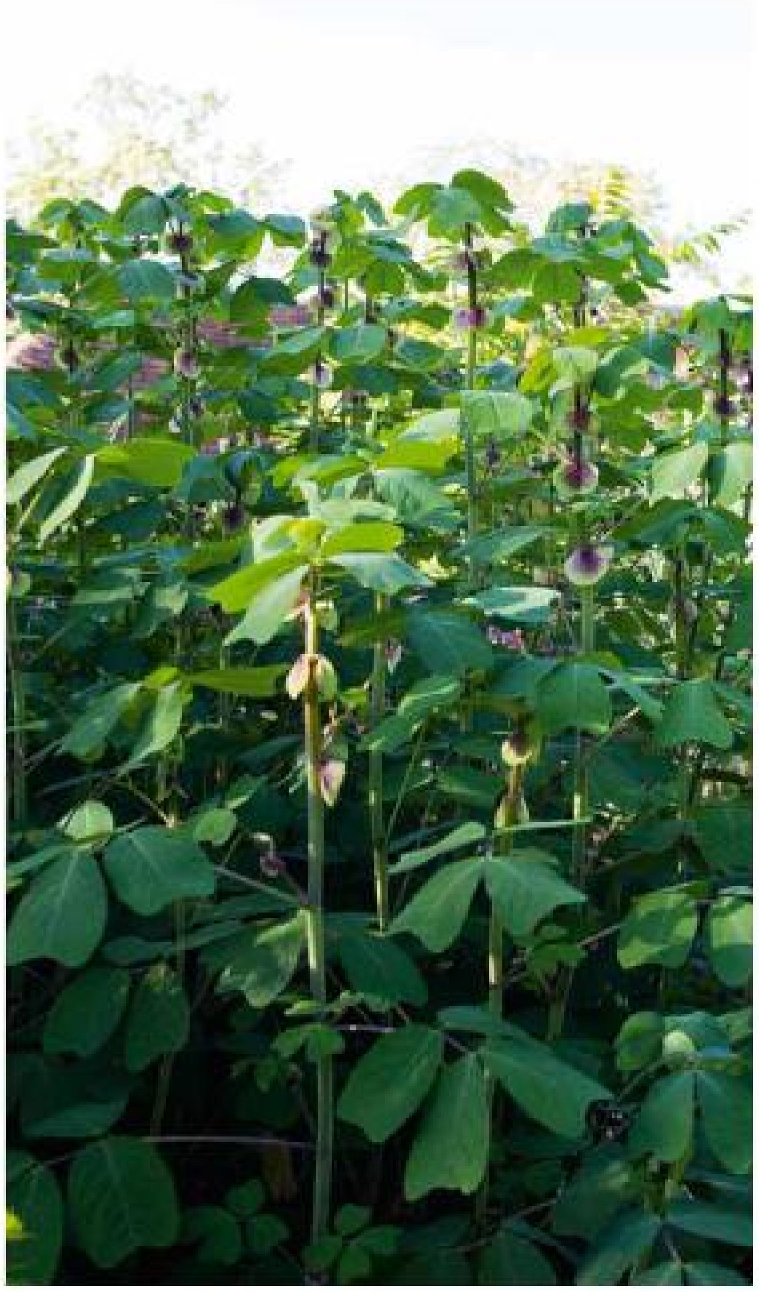
Dahlia coccinea is a highly variable species in the wild and in cultivation. This superior form given to us by Lady Mary Keen is tall, elegant but not too wispy and wonderfully robust, making a dramatic show of ruby red flowers above filigree rich green leaves. The single flowers are delicately nodding, giving the plant a bashful and self-conscious expression making it ideal for an informal situation. The flowers are free and not stiff with an overlapping ring of long, gently twisting ray florets incurved around a central yellow disc and carried on long stems.

Height/spread 2m x 70cm.
Origins Species is indigenous to Mexico.
Conditions Good soil in full sun.
Season July to the first frosts.

Amicia zygomeris

A bizarre and curious shrubby perennial that belongs somewhere in alien outer space. Makes an awkward upright shape, with stems pushing up from ground level, hung with alternating grey-green leaves composed of four, pinnate, compound, cleft-tipped and heart-shaped leaflets. These fold shut by night only to open the next day and are held on stems decorated in conspicuous rounded pale green stipules, heavily veined reddish purple. Yellow pea flowers follow in late summer. Deceptively hardy, bouncing back from temperatures as low as -10°C, especially if given a protective mulch.

Height/spread 2.5m x 1m.
Origins Mountains of Mexico.
Conditions Well-drained soil in full sun.
Hardiness rating RHS H2, USDA 7b-9b.
Season July to first frosts.



(17 August), The West Wales Dahlia Society (19 August), The Cornish Dahlia Society Show (24 August), Norfolk and Suffolk Dahlia Society Show (26 August), Horsham & District Chrysanthemum and Dahlia Show (31 August) and many more. You'll be amazed at the high standards at these regional shows.

Crûg Farm Plants. Sue and Bleddyn Wynn-Jones have a mouthwatering range of plants that they have collected in the wild, many of which you won't be able to see anywhere else. Reserve several hours for a visit to take it all in. Open 28 March – 14 September. Crûg Farm Plants, Griffith's Crossing, Caernarfon, Gwynedd LL55 1TU. Tel 01248 670232. www.crug-farm.co.uk

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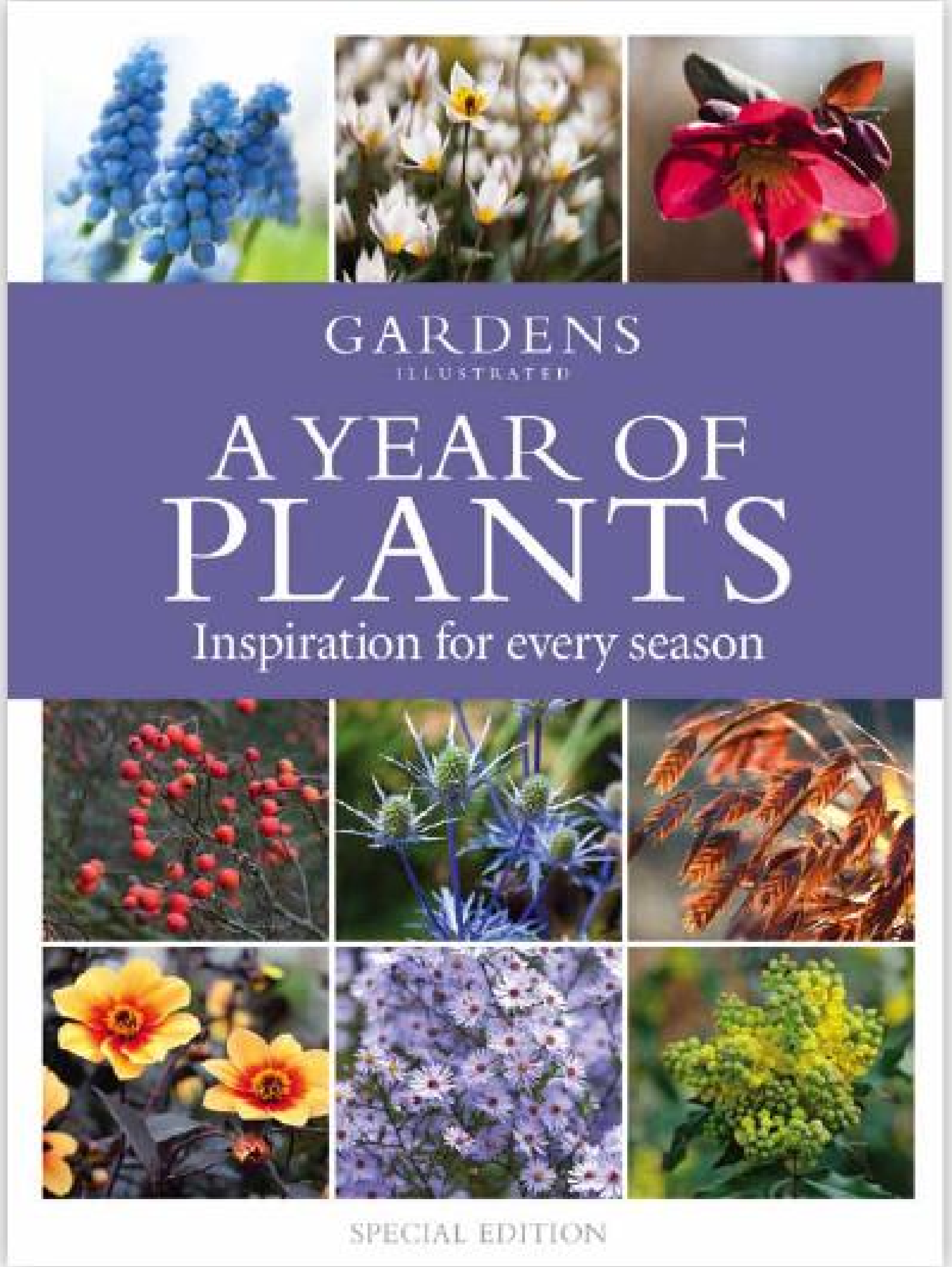

A Year of Plants is essential reading for gardeners looking for inspired planting ideas to enrich their gardens from early spring to late winter.

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The good fight

As this variable summer continues, it's important to remain vigilant, trimming, feeding and battling for the welfare of your plants

WORDS **LIA LEENDERTZ** ILLUSTRATION **PETRA BÖRNER**

Trim lavender

The lavender has finished flowering, and so wants one of its two annual trims. I don't like a rangy, leggy lavender and I completely love a tightly clipped one, but hack back into woody stems and the thing will die. The key is the double trim. I chop off those spent flowers (no harm in plunging them into a jar of caster sugar for lavender scented sugar, or sewing them en masse into little moth-discouraging pillows) and clip a little into the new growth. This spurs the production of shoots further down the stems and I can prune the plant back to those in September. New neat growth should follow.

Control vine weevils

Those of us who garden heavily in pots have one sworn enemy: the vine weevil. This is the time of year when the action is taking place, though you won't know it – the grubs are all underground, eating their way through the roots until the plant is left almost entirely unsupported. But you can treat now, with a biological control, and I do it every few years as a preventative measure. Green Gardener (www.greengardener.co.uk) will send you Nemasys Vine Weevil Killer: a pack of live nematodes to mix in your watering can and water on to your plants.

Feed agapanthus

I acquired a huge cracked plastic pot of agapanthus during the clear-out of a late great aunt's garden. It was stuffed with closely packed agapanthus roots that produced multiple blue firework flowers year after year. Eventually, guilt-ridden, I prised it from its pot, split it and planted it out, which kindness it repaid by refusing to flower for several years. Now back in pots, it has still never regained former glories, and I have been told that the key is to feed it while it is flowering this year. This is when the flower buds are being set, so use something high in potash such as tomato or comfrey feed.

Things to do

Order spring bulbs now for autumn planting.

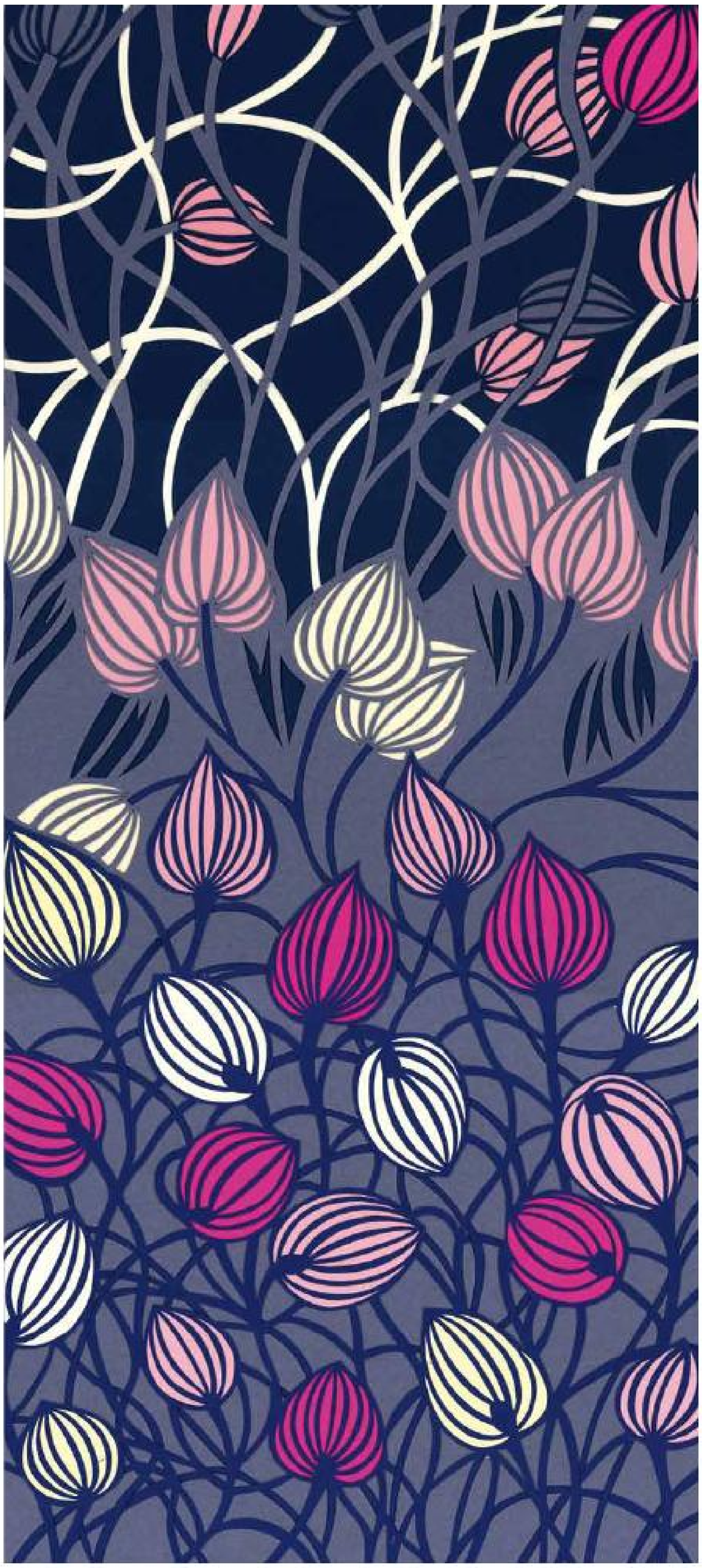
Take cuttings of rosemary, sage and thyme for planting out next year.

Sow salad leaves for winter cutting: oriental mustards, hardy lettuces, Swiss chard and kale.

Sow green manures on areas to be left fallow for winter.

Prune trained fruit, shortening spurs and cutting out wayward shoots.

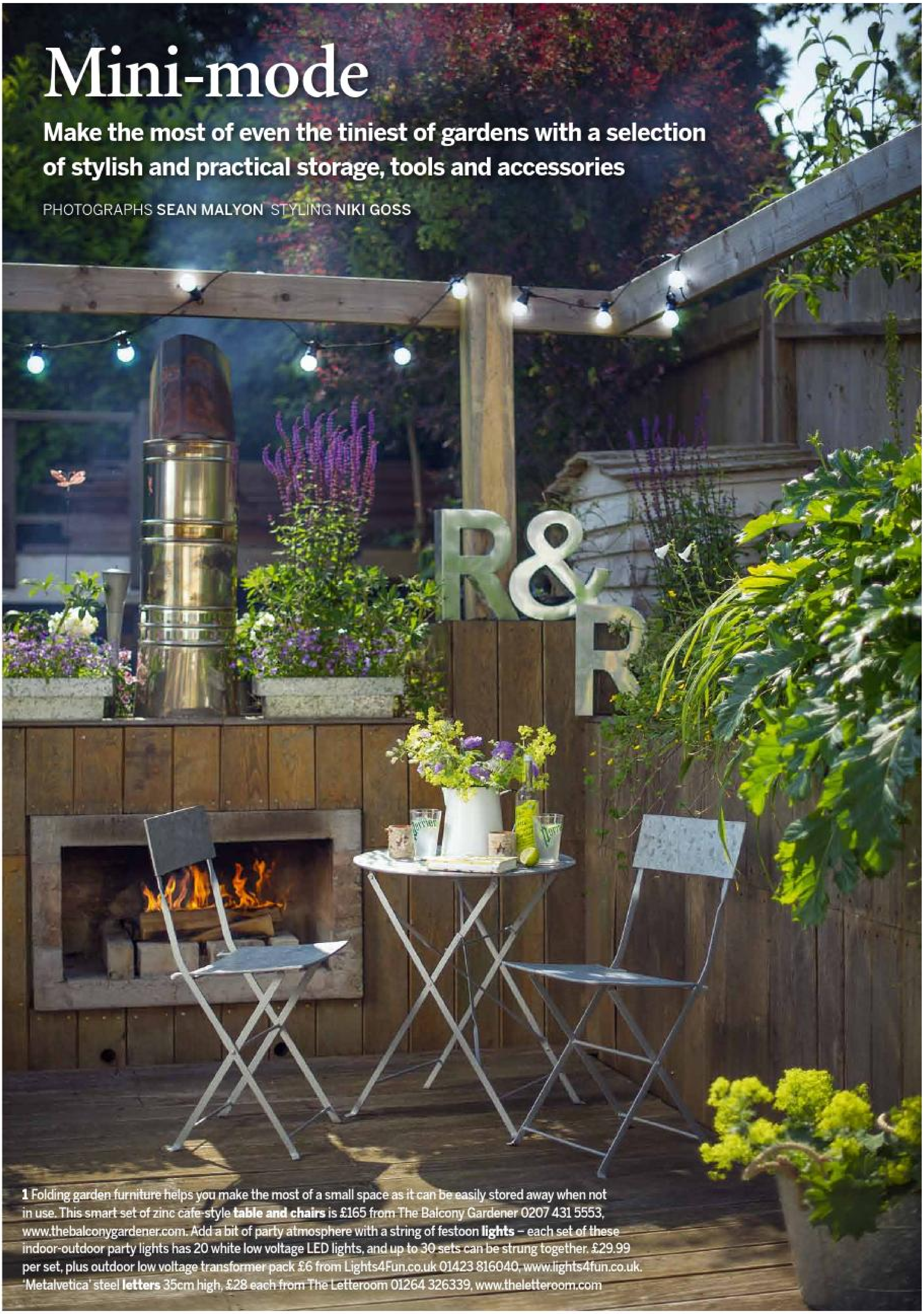
Even if it's raining remember to water containers deeply. Old washing up water is the perfect way to soak them through.



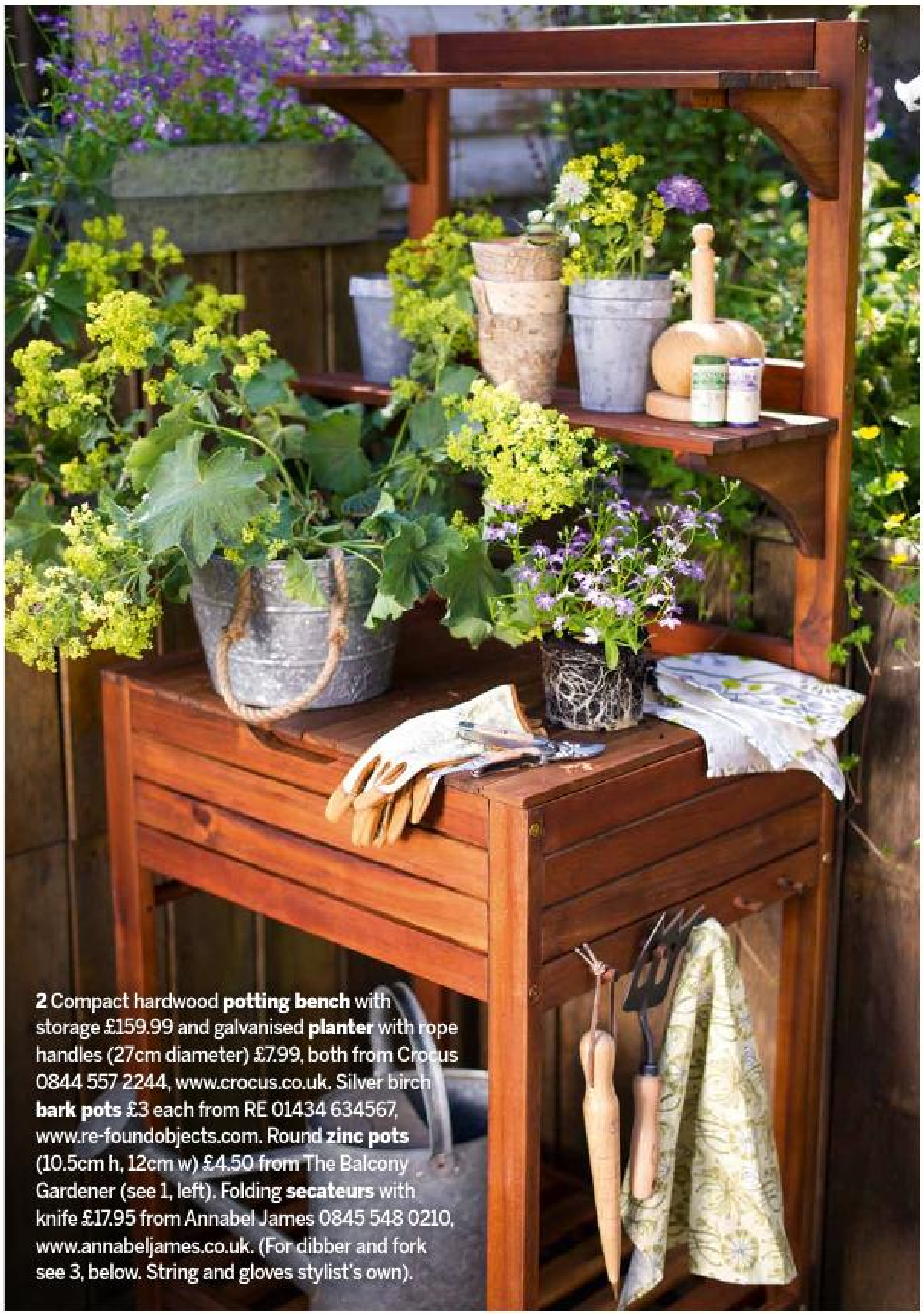
Mini-mode

Make the most of even the tiniest of gardens with a selection of stylish and practical storage, tools and accessories

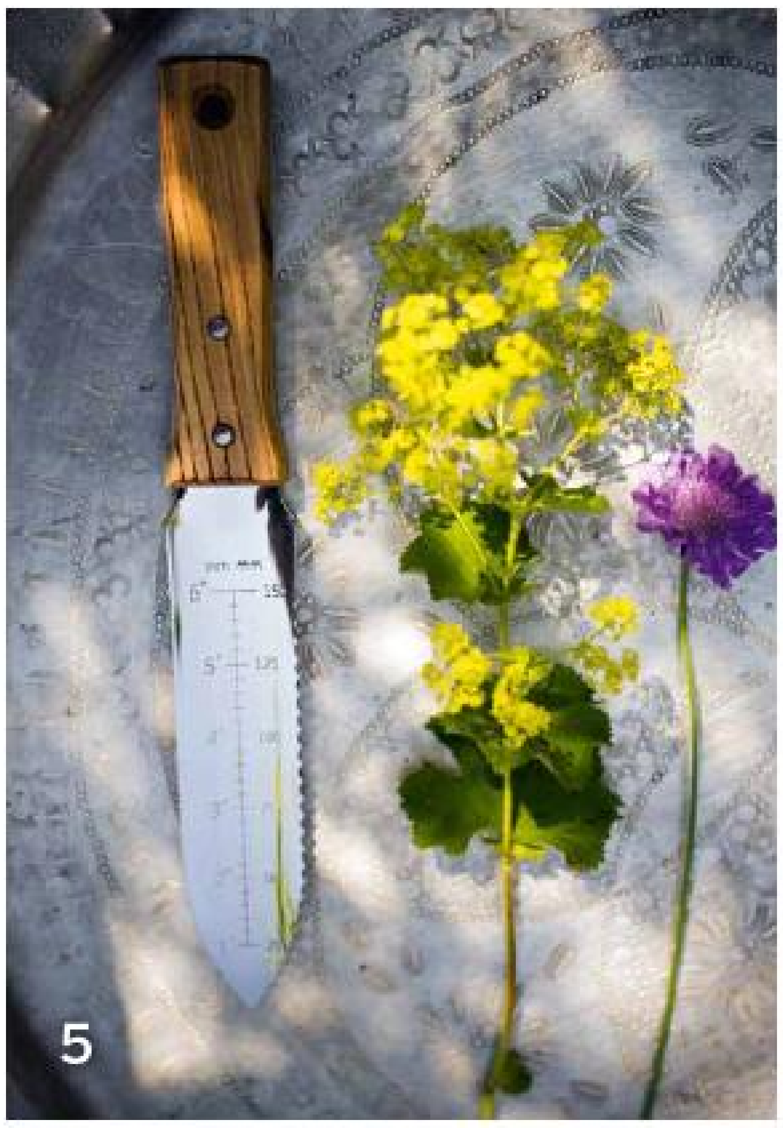
PHOTOGRAPHS **SEAN MALYON** STYLING **NIKI GOSS**



1 Folding garden furniture helps you make the most of a small space as it can be easily stored away when not in use. This smart set of zinc cafe-style **table and chairs** is £165 from The Balcony Gardener 0207 431 5553, www.thebalconygardener.com. Add a bit of party atmosphere with a string of festoon **lights** – each set of these indoor-outdoor party lights has 20 white low voltage LED lights, and up to 30 sets can be strung together. £29.99 per set, plus outdoor low voltage transformer pack £6 from Lights4Fun.co.uk 01423 816040, www.lights4fun.co.uk. 'Metalvetica' steel **letters** 35cm high, £28 each from The Letteroom 01264 326339, www.theletteroom.com



2 Compact hardwood **potting bench** with storage £159.99 and galvanised **planter** with rope handles (27cm diameter) £7.99, both from Crocus 0844 557 2244, www.crocus.co.uk. Silver birch **bark pots** £3 each from RE 01434 634567, www.re-foundobjects.com. Round **zinc pots** (10.5cm h, 12cm w) £4.50 from The Balcony Gardener (see 1, left). Folding **secateurs** with knife £17.95 from Annabel James 0845 548 0210, www.annabeljames.co.uk. (For dibber and fork see 3, below. String and gloves stylist's own).



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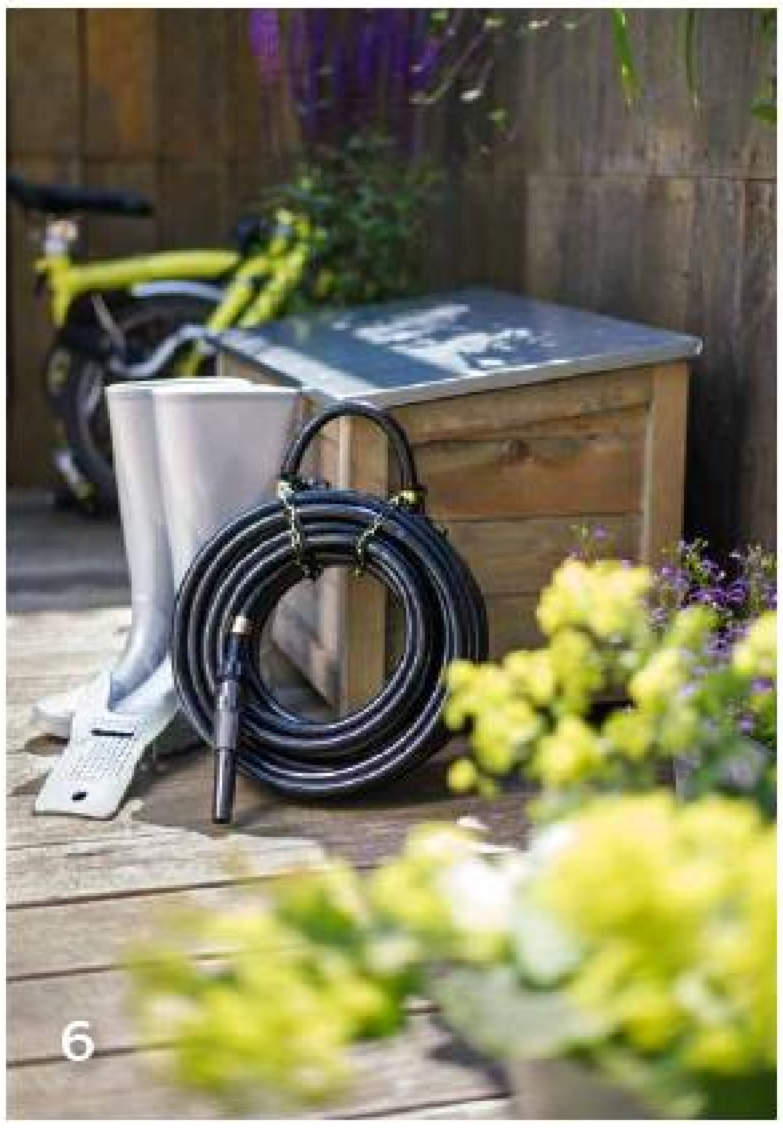

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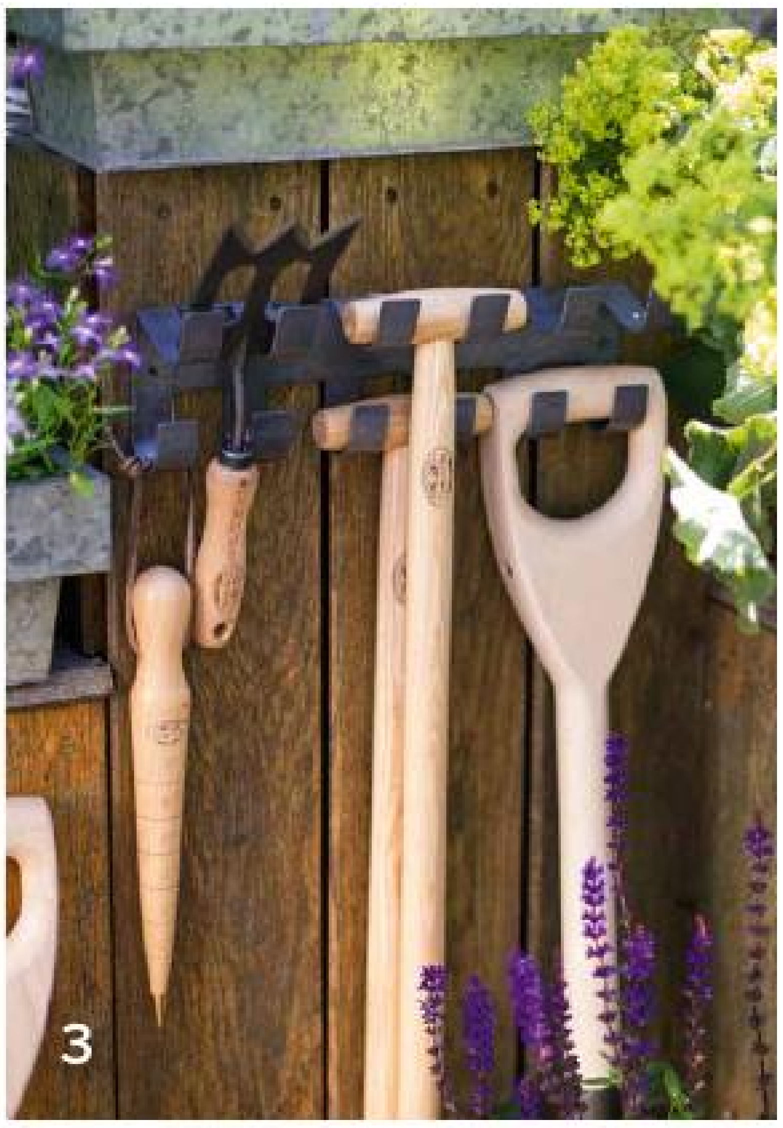

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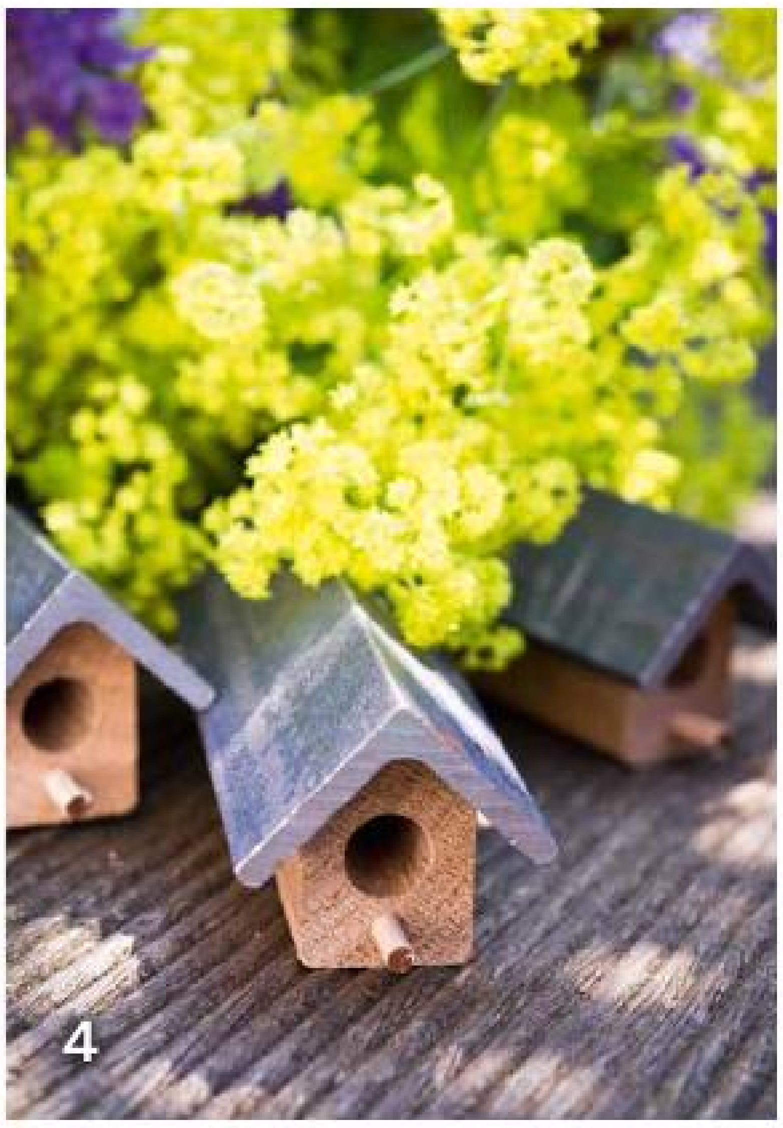

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3 Galvanised tool **hook**, £22.99, can accommodate both 'D' and 'T' handled tools. DeWit tools from left: brass tipped **dibber** £22.99, hand '**spork**' £23.99, small **fork** £24.99 and small **spade** £29.99, both with long 'T' shaped handles. Border **spade** with 'D' handle (far right) £49.99, all from Crocus (see 2, above left).

4 Set of three **bee houses** £21.95 from The Balcony Gardener (see 1, left).

5 The Japanese 'Hori Hori' **planting knife** features a serrated edge and depth markings and is a great all-round tool, £27.50 from Objects of Use 01865 241705, www.objectsofuse.com. Vintage Moroccan **tray** (in background) 76cm £145 from RE, see 2, above left.

6 Designer garden **hose** in 'Black Swan' £85 from Barbed 020 8878 1994, www.barbed.co.uk. Aluminium **boot jack** £17.50 from RE, see 2, above left. Outdoor wooden **storage box** £135 from Garden Trading 0845 6084 448, www.gardentrading.co.uk. Wellies and folding bike, stylist's own.

Special thanks to Julia Jenkins for allowing us to photograph in her garden.

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Small gardens

Four inspirational gardens, each taking a different approach to the challenges of making the most of limited space

RACHEL WARNE

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Japanese-inspired and just eight metres square page 40

Ann-Marie's exuberant mix of grasses and perennials includes *Stipa gigantea*, *Sanguisorba* 'Pink Tanna' and *Verbena bonariensis*, with *Geranium* Patricia (= 'Brempat') and *Teucrium hircanicum* 'Paradise Delight', all bursting out over silvery oak decking.

All things to all people

Designer, writer and presenter Ann-Marie Powell has managed to incorporate areas for relaxation, socialising and children's play into her own small plot

WORDS **CAMILLA SWIFT** PHOTOGRAPHS **RACHEL WARNE**

Echinacea purpurea among a haze of *Anemanthele lessoniana*.

Ann-Marie Powell against a backdrop of hemerocallis and *Monarda* 'Scorpion'.

Cosmos atrosanguineus and *Verbena bonariensis* mingle with *Stipa gigantea*.

Ann-Marie Powell is an accomplished presenter and writer as well as a talented garden designer and landscaping expert. Her garden, practical, functional and beautiful, mirrors her passion for gardening, her infectious energy and wickedly throaty laugh. It may be small – "it's just a suburban garden really" – yet she has made it work for everything she loves most in life: entertaining, gossip, children, chilling with a glass of wine.

Ann-Marie, her partner Jules, and their two small boys, came in search of a bigger garden. She fell in love with the house because of the trees on the road, "amazing scots pines", and an abundant azalea by the front door. Here she has transformed a self-seeding dumping ground – her words – into an idyllic miniature woodland hideout. A low row of box balls, fugitives from a Chelsea show garden, planted about with *Thalictrum aquilegifolium*, *Deschampsia*, and ribbons of *Galium* line the front of the house, while a narrow path winds back towards the leafy street, through a small area stuffed with bulbs – *Nectaroscordum*, *Crinum* x *powellii*, *Camassia leichtlinii*, and *Eremurus*, all spiking through a lovely *Cornus kousa*, a fine *Eriobotrya* and a massive rhododendron. Bulbs are brilliant for a small space, she says, where up is the only way to go. Ann-Marie loves it here, this borrowed landscape with borrowed plants.

The back garden presented a bigger challenge. "Normal, sensible people do the kitchen or the electrics. We did the garden first." With a brace of stalwart friends to help, Ann-Marie and Jules squared up to a mass of concrete rubble, a sharply sloping lawn, a gigantic leylandii hedge and a ropey retaining wall. They punched holes in the concrete before cladding it with oak board decking laid on massive sleepers, ripped out the leylandii, levelled the lawn, dug beds.

▷

KEY ELEMENTS

What Small multi-tasking garden, sheltered and east facing.

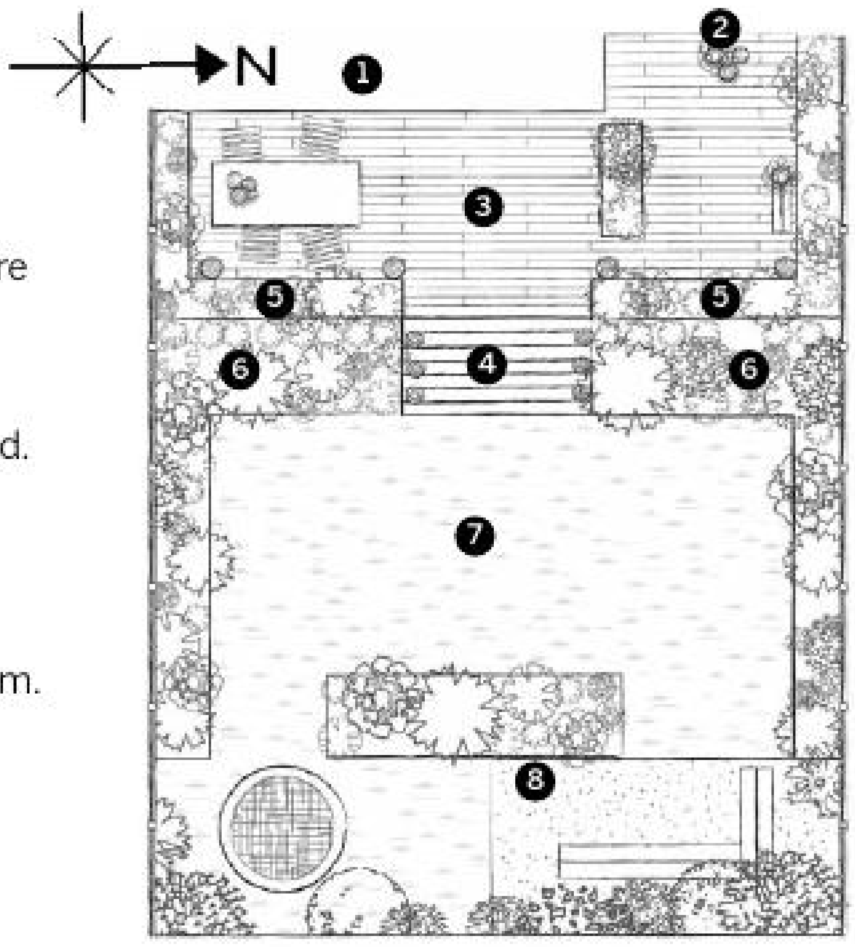
Where A small leafy village in Hampshire overlooking the South Downs.

Size 25m x 8m.

Soil Sandy and acidic, but much worked.

Special features Oversized planting scheme viewed from a generous oak-boarded platform.

Designed by www.ann-mariepowell.com.



1 House
2 Garage/workshop
3 Decking
4 Steps to lawn
5 Sunken beds
6 Lower beds
7 Lawn
8 The Sink

> *“I’m a bit of a Miss Havisham, really,” she admits, “I like things slowly degenerating, rotting, floating off into the stratus”*

▷ Four years on, the garden is settling. The oak decking, slightly gnarled and battered, now softening to a pearly grey. On either side of steps leading down to the lawn, sunken beds, instead of the usual balustrading, act as buffers to the rest of the garden, where the tidy-minded Jules insisted on a nice rectangular lawn. Six *Sorbus aria* rise out of the narrow side beds and enormous plants wrestle for space. “Too many trees for this garden really, but I love feeling enclosed.”

“I’ve gone against the grain using huge plants in such a small garden,” says Ann-Marie. *Rodgersia*, *Deschampsia flexuosa* and loads of *Veronicastrum* get really big, but make the most of vertical space. Across the bottom of the lawn runs a small rectangular bed, crammed with *Stipa gigantea*. “Ace plant. I love it. Far too big. There were five; Jules made me remove two, but I replaced them with three *Calamagrostis brachytricha* when he wasn’t looking.” Here vegetables and perennials, *Calendula*, *Eschscholzia*, sweet peas, beans, sorrel, and *Verbena bonariensis*, jostling riotously, screen what she calls The Sink, “where we chuck the children”, which miraculously accommodates a hammock, a trampoline, an assault course and two large space hoppers, which can’t be entirely beneficial for the borders. “I don’t go for boringly indestructible childproof plants,” says Ann-Marie, “but football is not allowed.”

This garden looks wonderful in late summer: the grasses, with *Knautia*, *Echinacea* and lashings of *Verbena*, tower head-high. Ann-Marie loves *Lychnis*, *Hemerocallis* ‘Summer Wine’ and her red sunflowers which look you in the eye when you’re sitting on the deck. “I’m a bit of a Miss Havisham, really,” she admits, “I like things slowly degenerating, rotting, floating off into the stratus.”

The garden is where Ann-Marie feels most at home. “I love being outside. I eat breakfast here just to get that first injection of light and shade.” She hankers after more space – a glass house, a vegetable garden. But this is what she can realistically manage for the moment, and as she says, creating a small garden on a tiny budget comes with its own disciplines and challenges. And as long as she’s gardening, she’s happy. □

A regiment of soon-to-be crimson sunflowers peer up to the deck from the garden below over buttresses of *Anemanthele lessoniana* and *Echinacea*.

TIPS FOR SMALL GARDENS

Ann-Marie Powell’s expert hints on making the most of a limited space

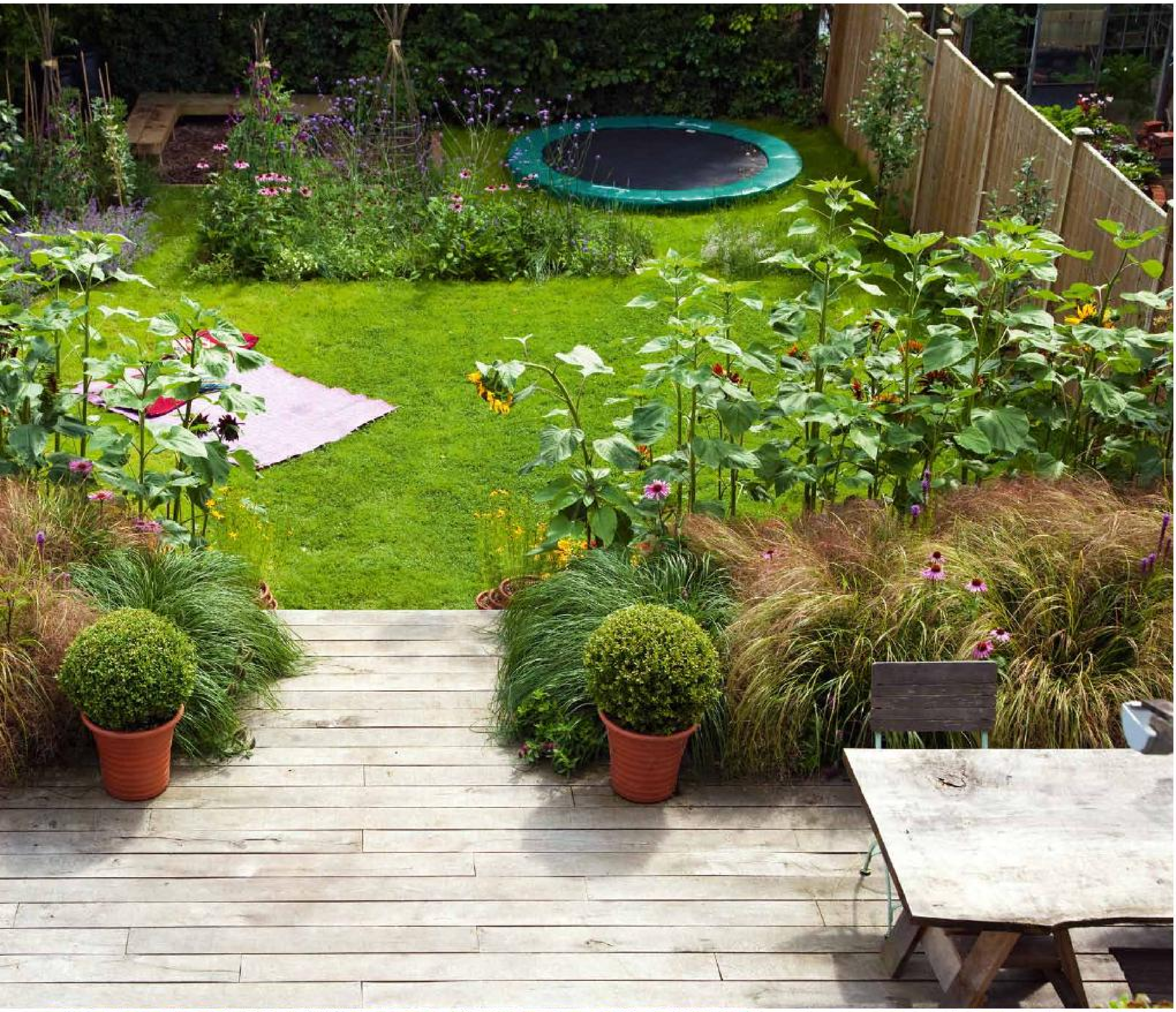
Big plants In a confined area, says Ann-Marie, you need to make the best possible use of vertical space. And not just with climbers. Go for grasses *Deschampsia* or *Stipa*.

For (not entirely gardening enthusiast) children Use plants that are fun to grow and encourage wildlife – sunflowers work perfectly on both counts. Benches on Ann-Marie’s deck are groaning with pots and baskets filled with tomatoes, basil, salads, strawberries, which her boys like to pick and eat. Down in the borders there are peas, beans, and raspberry canes. The boys enjoy helping Ann-Marie hack back the grasses in spring.

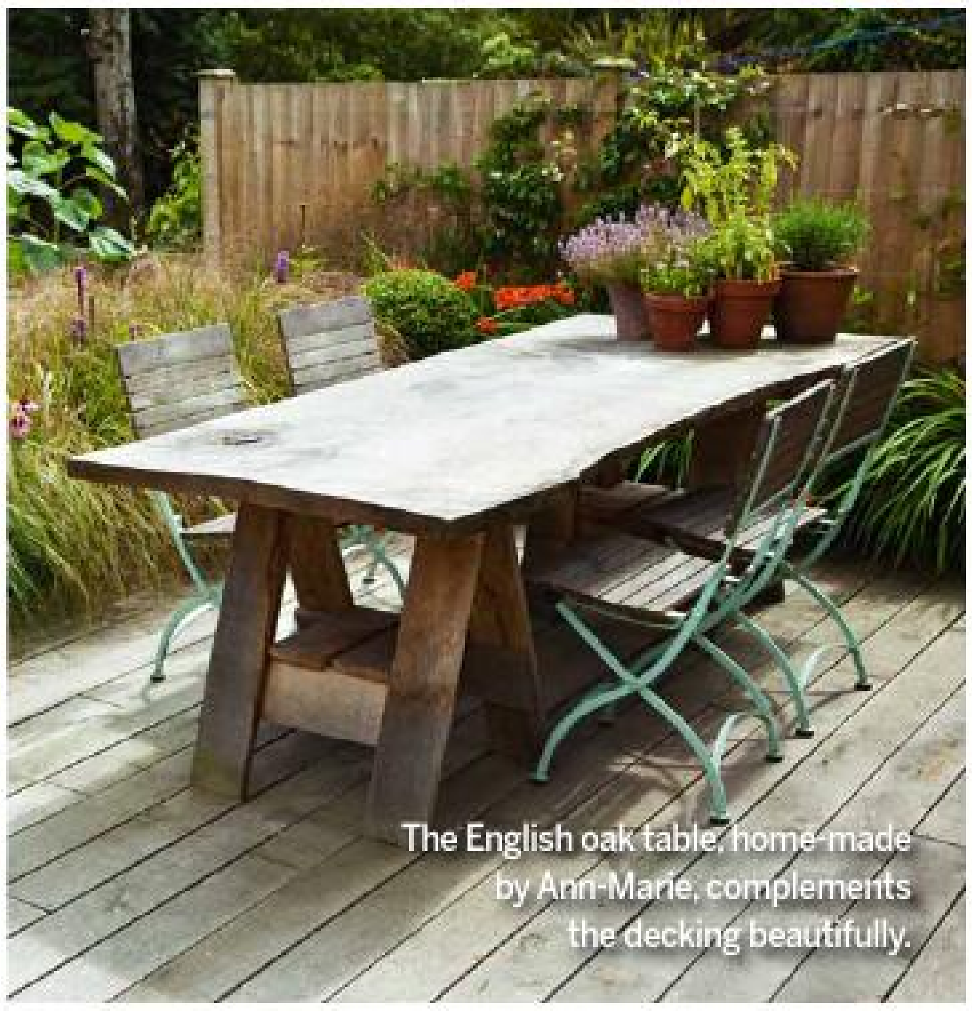
Different places for different moods In Ann-Marie’s garden the woodland area at the front of the house is for peace and solitude. The decking area is for entertaining. The Sink is a brilliant enclosed play area for the children. Just no plastic swings, says Ann-Marie.

Plant combinations Mix grasses with tall perennials for year-round interest: Ann-Marie’s favourite plant combination is *Eupatorium maculatum* Atropurpureum Group ‘Orchard Dene’ with *Miscanthus*, and *Veronicastrum* with pretty much everything.

The lean-to workshop nestles at the side of the house and adjoins the decking through a tangle of relaxed planting.



Looking up from The Sink past a wigwam of sweet peas to claret sunflowers and yellow *Coreopsis verticillata* 'Grandiflora'.



The English oak table, home-made by Ann-Marie, complements the decking beautifully.

Bigger on the inside

A touch of architectural intervention has enabled landscape architect Deborah Nagan to produce a garden that truly belies its small dimensions

WORDS TIM RICHARDSON PHOTOGRAPHS ROBERT MABIC / GAP PHOTOS

Brixton is an exciting place to live (in a good way) and landscape architect Deborah Nagan has created a back-garden environment that can be energetic, productive, beautiful and tranquil – depending on how it is being used. In 1998 she moved into the ground and lower-ground floors of an imposing, listed Georgian house on the Brixton Road, a main thoroughfare, with buses and heavy traffic chugging by. Once it was a wide, elegant boulevard; now it has a distinctly edgier vibe.

The rear garden is an unusual triangular shape, squeezed on one side by the rear gardens of a row of houses and an adjoining alley. The design of the present garden was dictated not by this shape, however, but by an architectural intervention eight years ago at the back of the house – Deborah runs an architectural/landscape practice, Nagan Johnson, with her partner Michael Johnson. In order to create a terrace and rectangular pool at lower-ground-floor level, giving on to the master bedroom, a huge amount of soil was hand-dug and barrowed out of the garden, leaving a deep void. Three massive panels of 'skyscraper glass' – running the height of both storeys – were then craned over the top of the house and leveraged into position, creating a glass-cube dining area at ground level, overlooking the terrace and pool below.

This makes for a highly dramatic introduction to the garden, especially with the addition of a water-spouting steel RSJ, jutting out over the pool at ground level, and a massive tree fern, the complex patterned foliage of which can be appreciated from above. "The tree fern was a Christmas gift from a friend," Deborah recalls. "It was all wrapped up. I was horrified! I don't like tree ferns. I still don't – those fluffy stems. But looking down on one is another matter. And it's grown like mad – it likes it down there."

From the dining area, the linear shape of the garden can be appreciated: four laterally aligned beds which converge on the apex of the triangle at the far end of the garden.

▷

KEY ELEMENTS

What Architecturally designed triangular town garden.

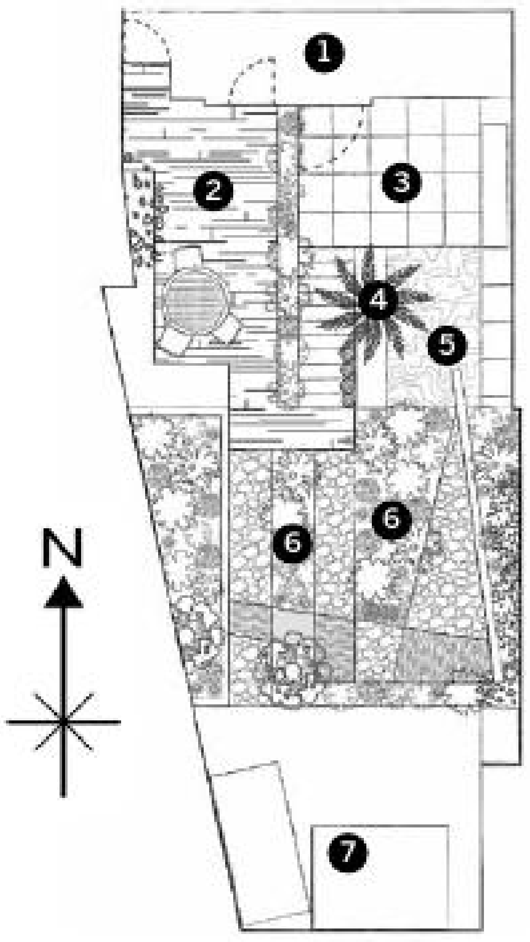
Where Brixton, South London.

Size 19m long x 9m wide (6m at its narrowest).

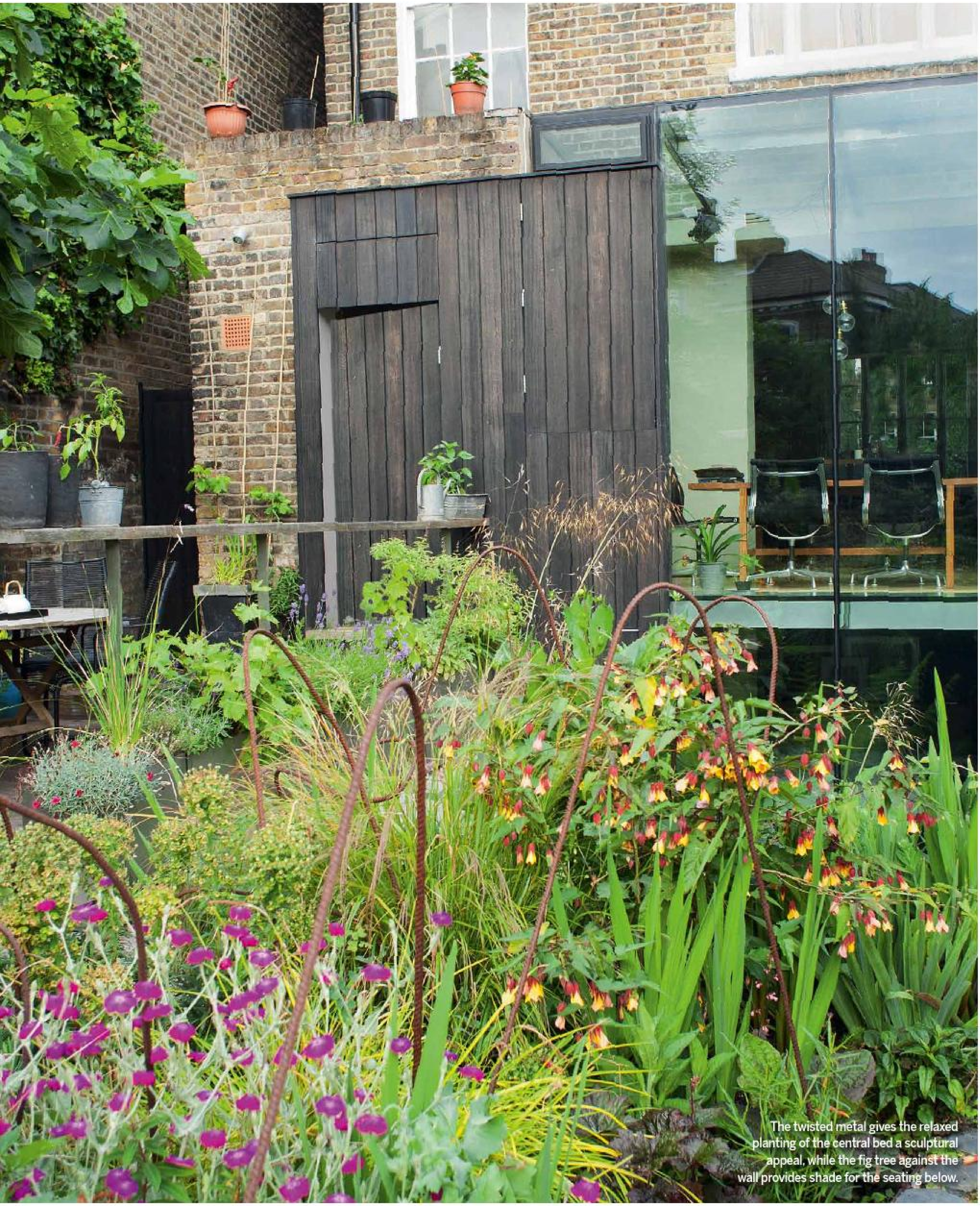
Soil Topsoil, clay and compost over builders' rubble.

Special features Sunken terrace with formal pool and cascade.

Key plants Giant tree fern in sunken terrace, nectaroscordum, agapanthus.



1 House
2 Decking
3 Sunken terrace
4 Tree fern
5 Pool and cascade
6 Planting beds
7 Shed and cold frame



The twisted metal gives the relaxed planting of the central bed a sculptural appeal, while the fig tree against the wall provides shade for the seating below.

> *There are all sorts of smart touches in this garden that suggest it is the work of design professionals*

▷ Each of these beds has a different character, with fruit at the edges of the garden and flowers in the middle. The central beds are the showpieces – orange daylilies, *Euphorbia palustris* and *E. mellifera*, black ophiopogon and fresh green liriope grasses, tulips in pots, heucheras ('Garnet' a favourite), *Sedum spectabile* and *S.* 'Matrona', *Iris sibirica*, geums and eremurus (white at the far end of garden, orange closer to the house). Among larger subjects, a delicate abutilon is a favourite, together with *Photinia* 'Red Robin', which lights up the far end of the garden, while curiosities include the stately nectaroscordum ("probably my favourite flower") and a number of South African restionaceae grasses recently liberated from the Garden Museum, where they were being cleared out to make way for a new garden.

Echinacea and rudbeckia are deployed selectively to create colour and drama. "This garden is actually more like window boxes than anything," Deborah explains. "We don't garden for permanence – we start again each year. That way we get more flowers per square inch."

The fruit borders which flank the garden contain an impressive roster – apricots, raspberries, 'Oregon thornless' blackberries, gooseberries, whitecurrants – interspersed with agapanthus, self-seeded foxgloves, sages, plenty of *Lychnis coronaria*, fluffy fennel and creamy lemon-flowered *Scabiosa columbaria* subsp. *ochroleuca*. A pink flowered elderberry and a big old fig are sources of yet more produce, the fruit of the latter "dropping like bombs on the deck", according to Deborah.

There are all sorts of smart touches in this garden that suggest it is the work of design professionals, from the subtle variations in paving and crisp metal edging, to the way the benches around the small deck lift up to reveal the compost bins beneath. Even the large front garden – Michael's domain, dedicated to vegetables – has a design to savour, with dramatic multicoloured tripod supports for sweet peas. It just goes to show that a small garden can be pretty intense. "I guess what I do is make lots of jobs for myself so I feel I have a really big acreage," Deborah wryly observes. □

Bright pink *Lychnis coronaria* provides a splash of colour in the central beds. One bed is ornamental, the other productive.

TOP TIPS

Deborah Nagan lists the lessons to be learned from her small garden

1 Plan the space first – no amount of good gardening replaces a strong underlying concept.

2 No matter how small the garden, one or two over-scaled plants can make it seem bigger.

3 Every drop of (home-made) compost counts.

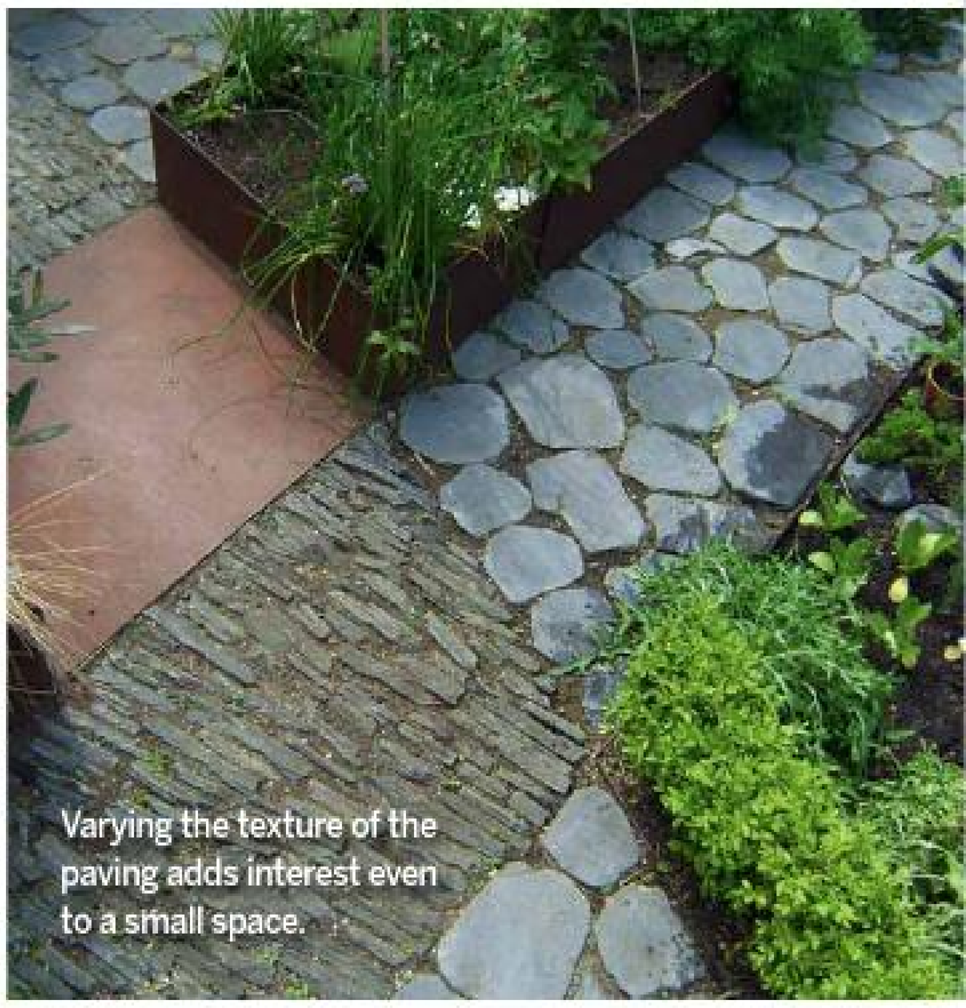
4 Eat in the sunshine – put the deck/eating space where it catches the light (ours is where the sun hits at breakfast time and the raspberries go straight in the cereal).

5 Share internal/external finishes to bring the garden into the house and vice versa.

6 Short termism is fine – you can treat a small garden a bit like a window box, planting more densely than usual for extra effect.

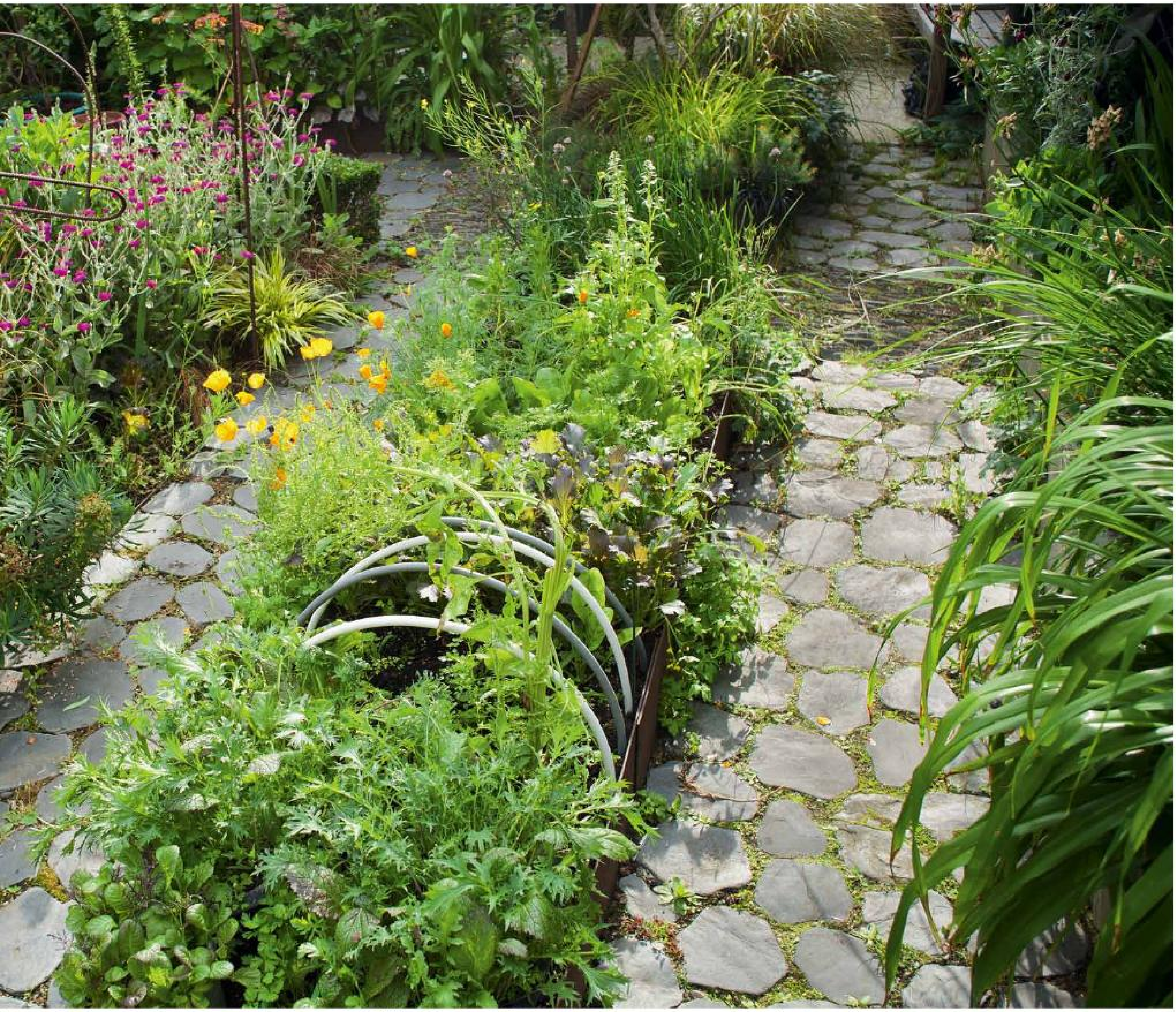
7 Don't feel you should work too hard at expert gardening – small bursts of activity can be very effective in a small space.

8 Plant things you can nibble on close to the house.

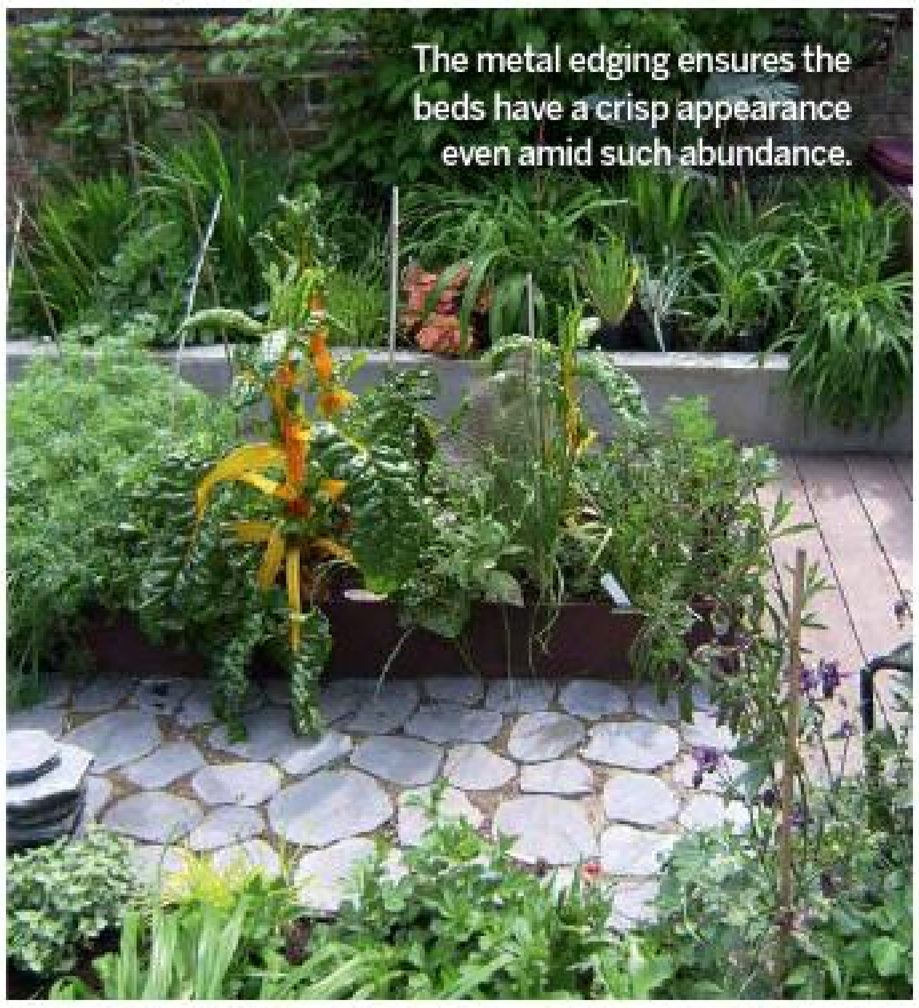


Varying the texture of the paving adds interest even to a small space.

BOTTOM LEFT & BOTTOM RIGHT BY DEBORAH NAGAN



The fronds of the *Dicksonia antarctica* tree fern are wonderful to look down on.



The metal edging ensures the beds have a crisp appearance even amid such abundance.

Small space, big ideas

This masterpiece of dense planting has turned a small London back garden into a space that enchants and delights no matter what time of year

WORDS CAMILLA PHELPS PHOTOGRAPHS MARIANNE MAJERUS

Designer Declan Buckley is a great believer in bold planting gestures. "You have to think big, even in a small space," he says. And in his design for the small back garden of a Victorian villa in East London, the simple layout is all about allowing the plants to take centre stage.

Glass doors span the width of the open-plan living area, so house and garden flow into one another. But once outdoors, the planting defines three different areas within the garden and gives the whole space a sense of intimacy and enclosure, of otherworldliness that is so often a trademark of Declan's gardens. He has made it very easy to ignore the tower block that punctuates the skyline just beyond.

Owner, performer Maria Friedman, says that she didn't need to give Declan a specific brief as he knew instinctively what the garden needed: it's a social space, workplace, and sanctuary. "Each area has its own atmosphere," she says. "You can cook, eat, sleep, get lost in the planting, but I also do a lot of work out there, so there are lots of plug sockets too."

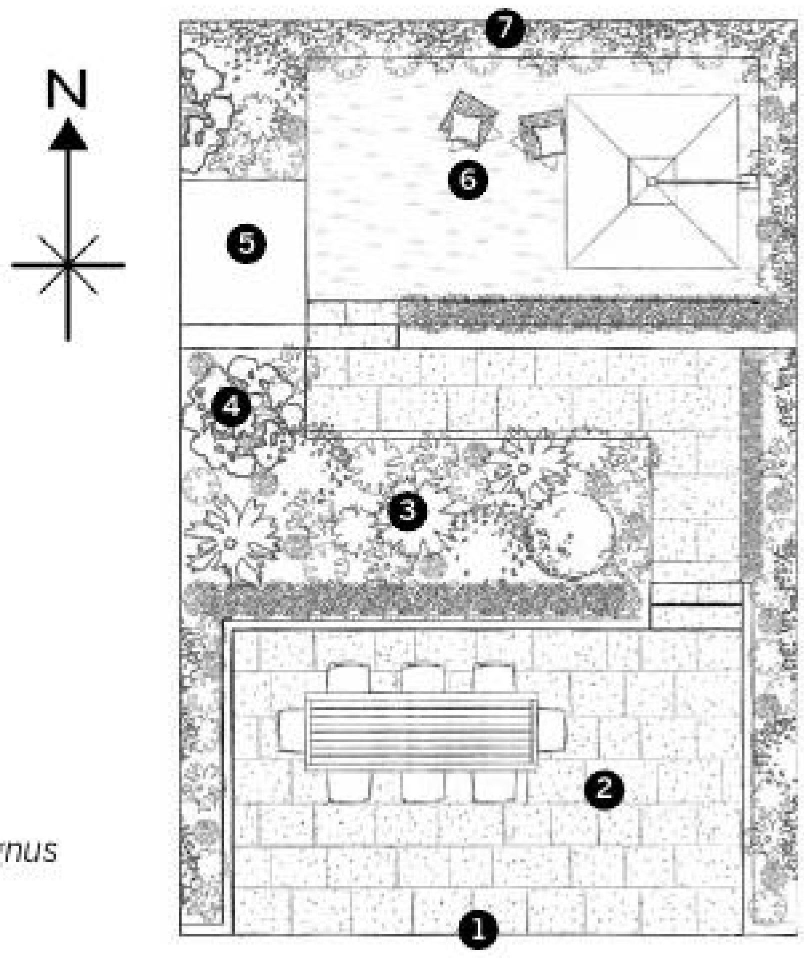
The design makes efficient use of all the available space. Declan worked very closely with the architect who was remodelling the interior and suggested dropping the original level of the garden immediately outside the house. This creates the seamless transition from the living room to the garden, and adds the illusion of depth. As a result there are three tiers: the generous paved outdoor dining space, a frothy meadow and a cooking area at the back.

The dark paving and fencing allows the hard landscaping to recede. Perching walls border the raised beds and are painted to complement the planting, while the fences are clothed with climbers. ▷

KEY ELEMENTS

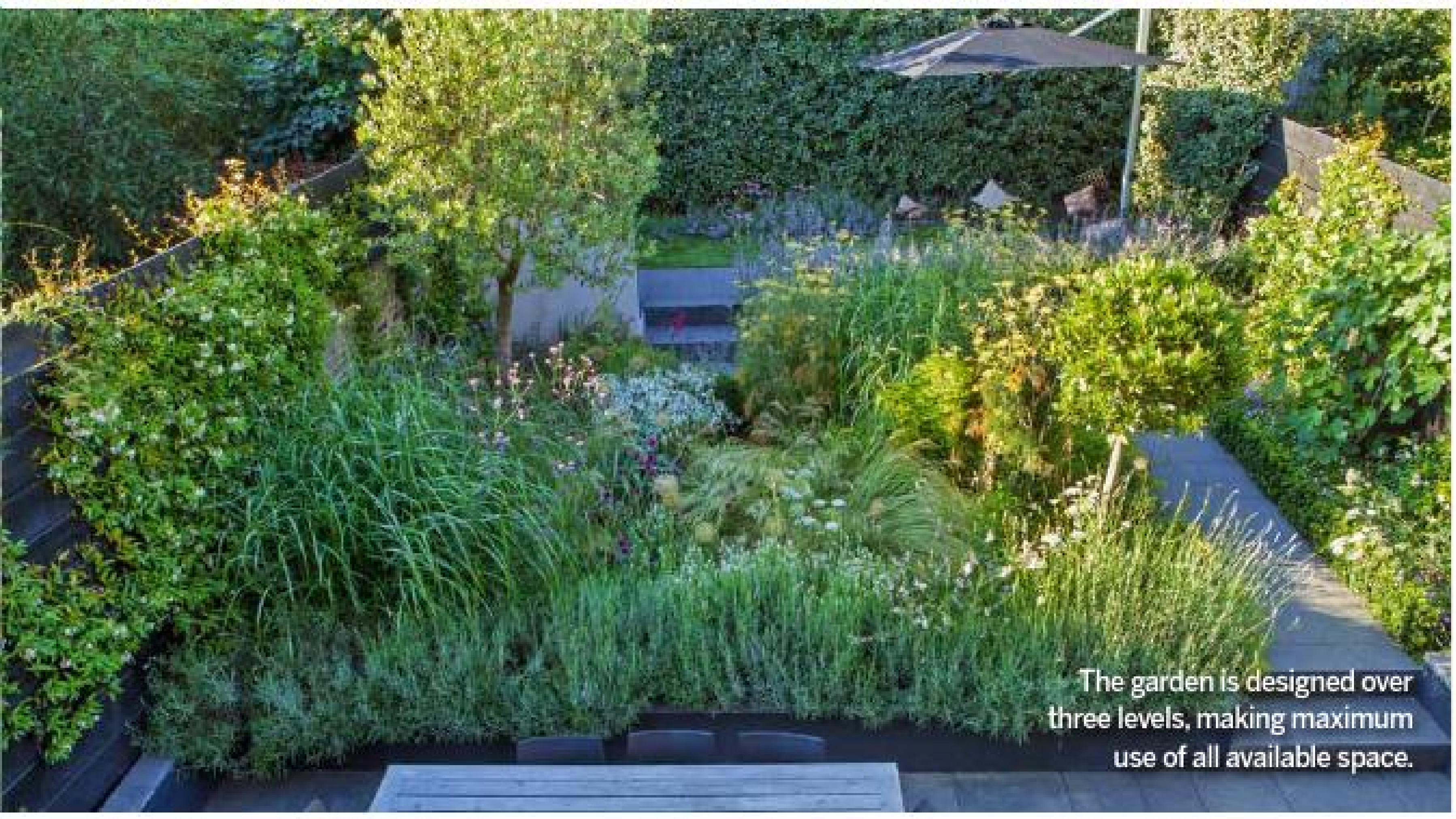
What Small town garden designed over three levels.
Where East London.
Size 10m sq.
Soil London clay.
Special features Packed with nectar-rich plants and successional colour.
Designed by Declan Buckley
www.buckleydesignassociates.com

1 Sliding doors to house
2 Paved dining area
3 Meadow planting
4 Olive tree
5 Cooking area
6 Lawn
7 Pleached *Eleagnus* hedging

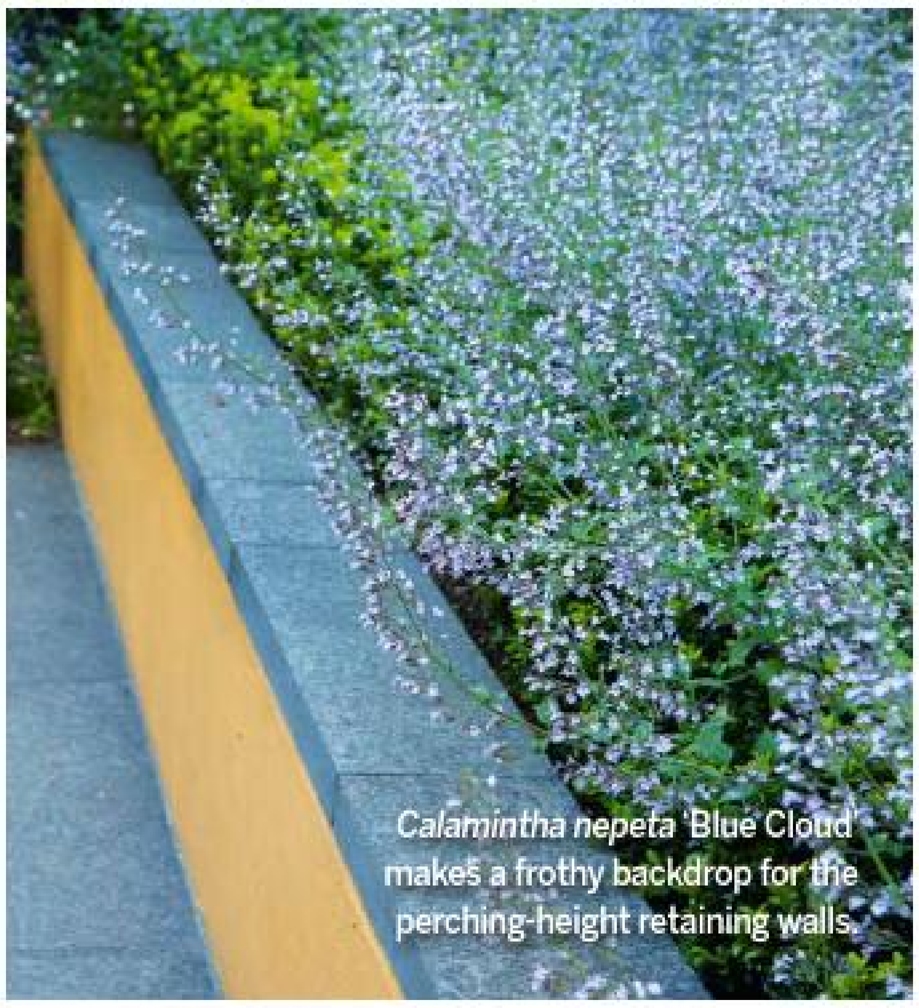


Declan uses a variety of alliums, including *Allium sphaerocephalon*, to add drama before the summer.

The exuberant planting is a wildlife-friendly nectar-rich palette of perennials and bulbs.



The garden is designed over three levels, making maximum use of all available space.



Calamintha nepeta 'Blue Cloud' makes a frothy backdrop for the perching-height retaining walls.

> *Maria says watching the garden through the seasons is like looking at a moving painting. "I don't have one garden, I have four"*

▷ But just as the hard landscaping is discreet, the planting is exuberant. The boundaries between the three levels are gently blurred with a year-round succession of flowering perennials, bulbs, grasses and edible herbs. "I probably planted more varieties than I would normally, but if there's a week without flowers I get a complaint," laughs Declan. The wildlife drawn to the deep blocks of planting, which is packed with nectar-rich plants, adds another dimension to delight Maria.

The starting point for the planting was an existing olive tree that was moved from the front garden – hence the palette of muted greens, greys and blues. A pleached eleagnus hedge provides a soft backdrop at the rear of the garden, blending with a mix of *Calamintha nepeta*, fennels, sages, lavenders, *Geranium* Rozanne (= 'Gerwatt'), *Verbena bonariensis* 'Lollipop', *Ammi majus*, *Miscanthus* and *Erigeron*. These are gentle clouds of planting, many of which are chosen for their extended flowering periods and good winter silhouette. Declan uses seasonal bursts of stronger colour to add a little drama: miniature daffodils in spring, purple alliums in early summer, penstemons through the autumn.

"Bulbs are very important early in the season," says Declan, "They grow up with a backdrop of the fresh new perennial growth and then the perennials kick in later in the year." Maria says watching the garden is like looking at a moving painting. "I don't have one garden, I have four," she enthuses. "Each season it's an entirely different space. Even when it snows the way it falls on the different plants is just exquisite." □

TOP TIPS

Declan Buckley's rules for creating a great small garden

1 *Euonymus japonicus* 'Macrophyllus' makes a great substitute for low box hedging and it doesn't suffer from blight.

2 Panelled hedging can be bought in for an instant green screen – Declan used *Elaeagnus* x *ebbingei*, which gives evergreen coverage with the added bonus of sweetly scented flowers in late autumn/early winter.

3 Don't be afraid of using artificial grass where necessary, says Declan, but use lots of real plants around it to blur the edges – don't let it butt up to a hard surface.

4 Pay attention to what's in the foreground – let the garden recede to get a sense of depth.

5 Plant in generous blocks but allow some room for self-seeding to add a freeform element.

6 Declan's top performers for long-flowering seasons are *Verbena bonariensis* 'Lollipop', penstemons and erigeron.

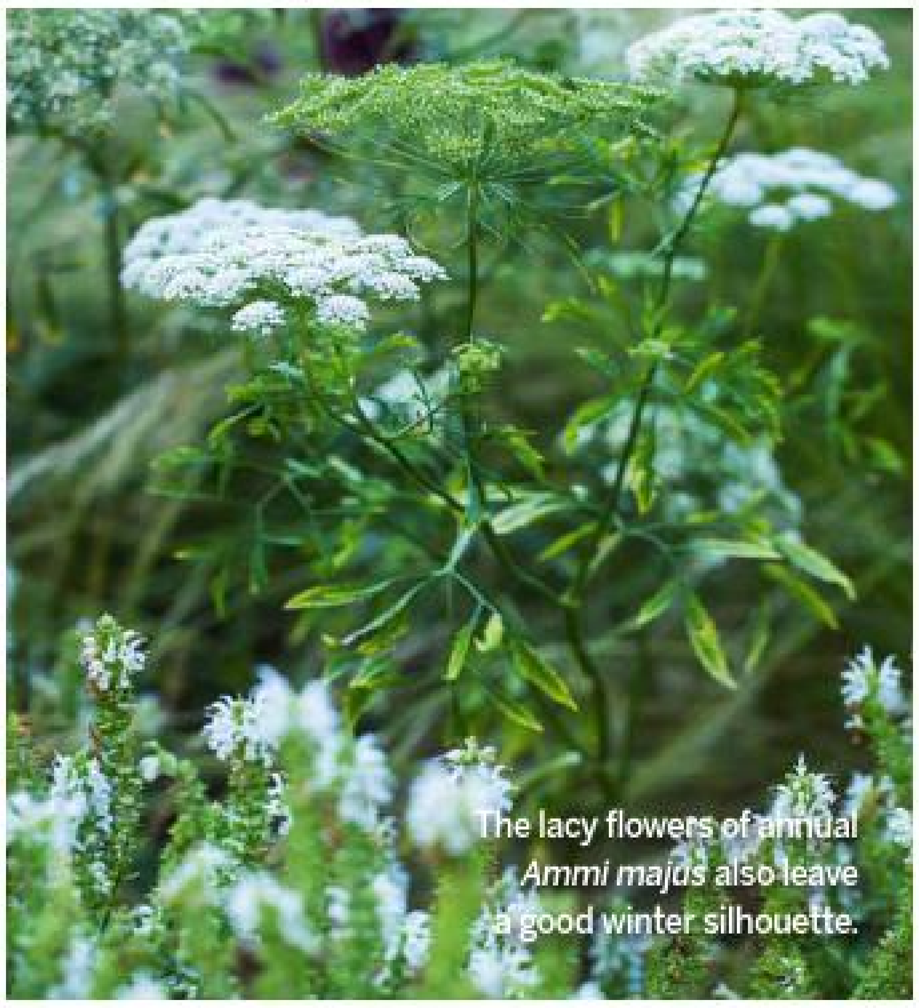
7 Design storage to hold what you need, rather than building a shed to hold everything.

8 Try to get double value out of everything – walls are for perching on as well as for raised beds. And don't paint them white – it's too stark and they always need touching up.

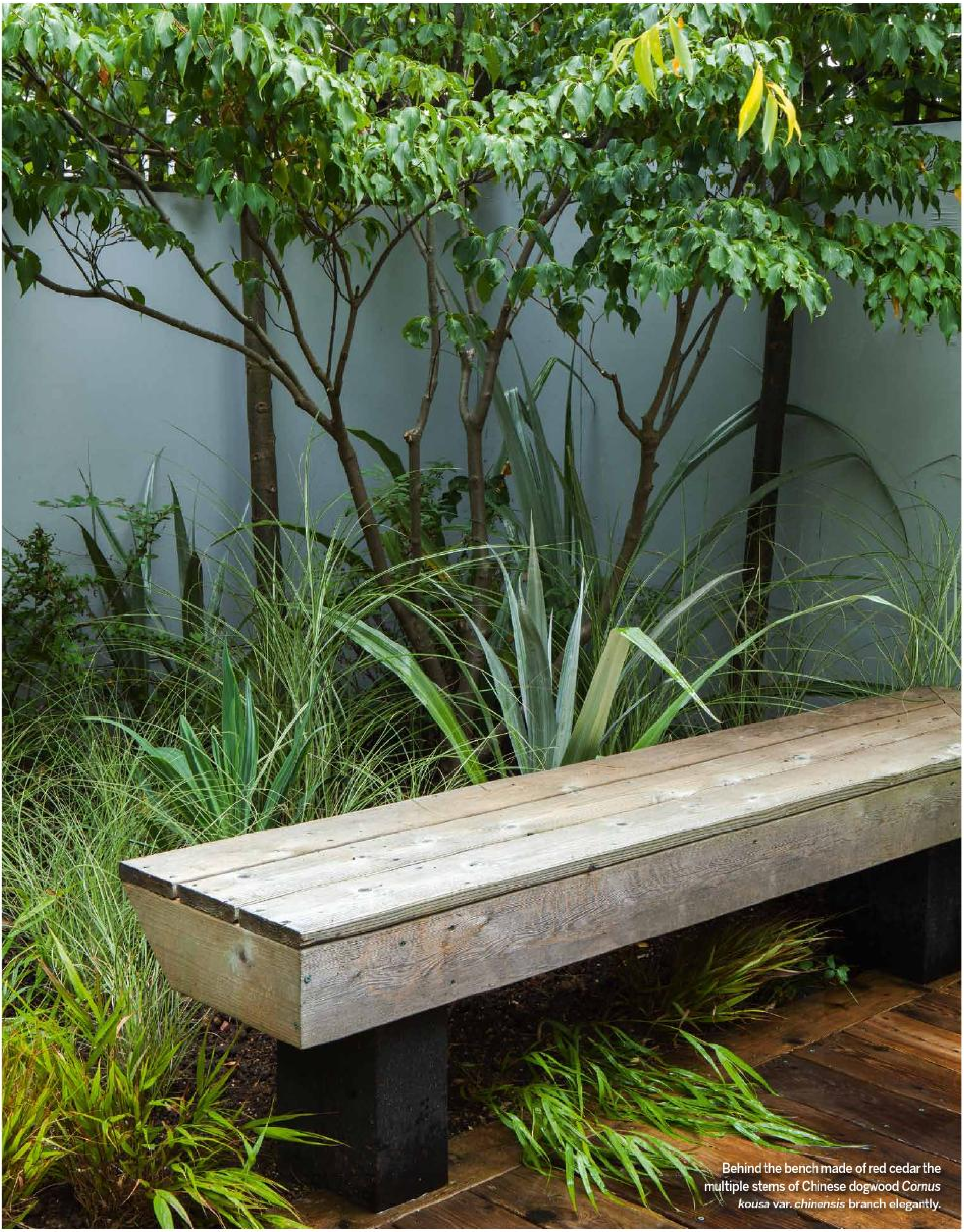
It's easy to entertain outdoors with this generous alfresco dining space.

Blue-flowered *Geranium* Rozanne (= 'Gerwatt') is paired with frothy erigeron daisies.

Soft summer perennials are allowed free rein against the elaeagnus hedging.



The lacy flowers of annual *Ammi majus* also leave a good winter silhouette.

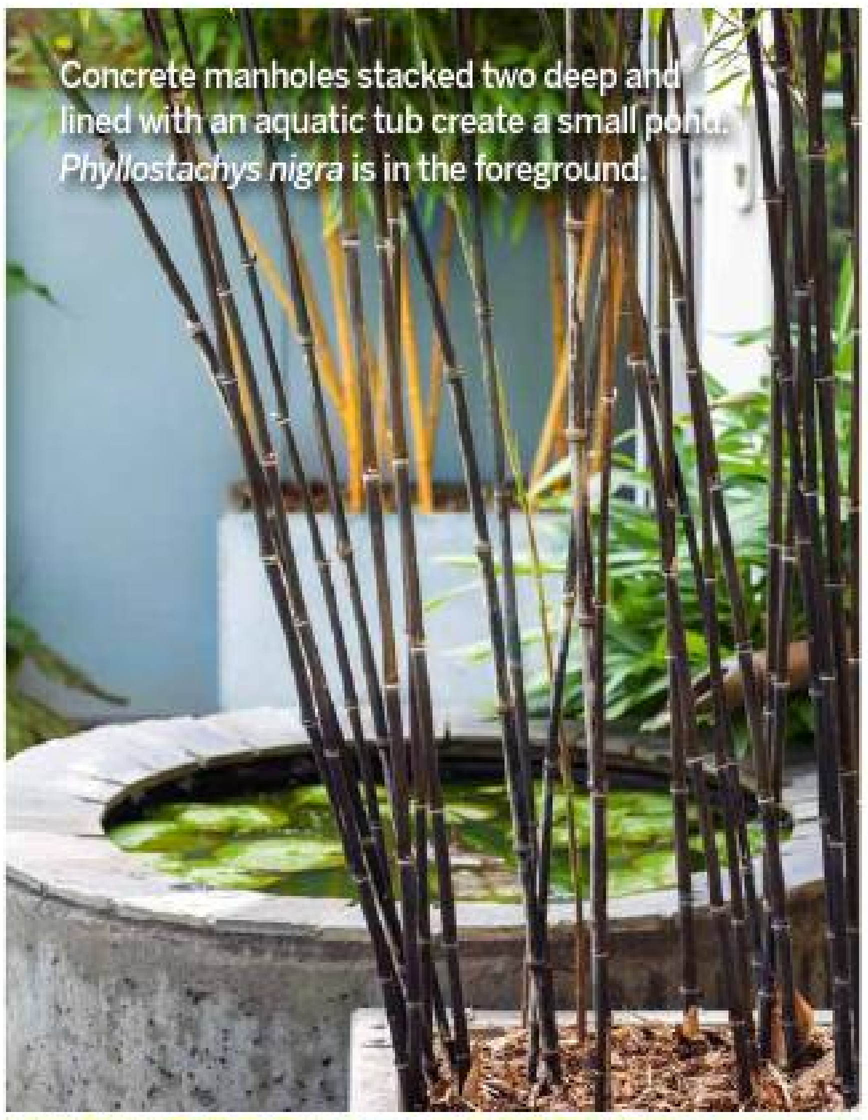


Behind the bench made of red cedar the multiple stems of Chinese dogwood *Cornus kousa* var. *chinensis* branch elegantly.

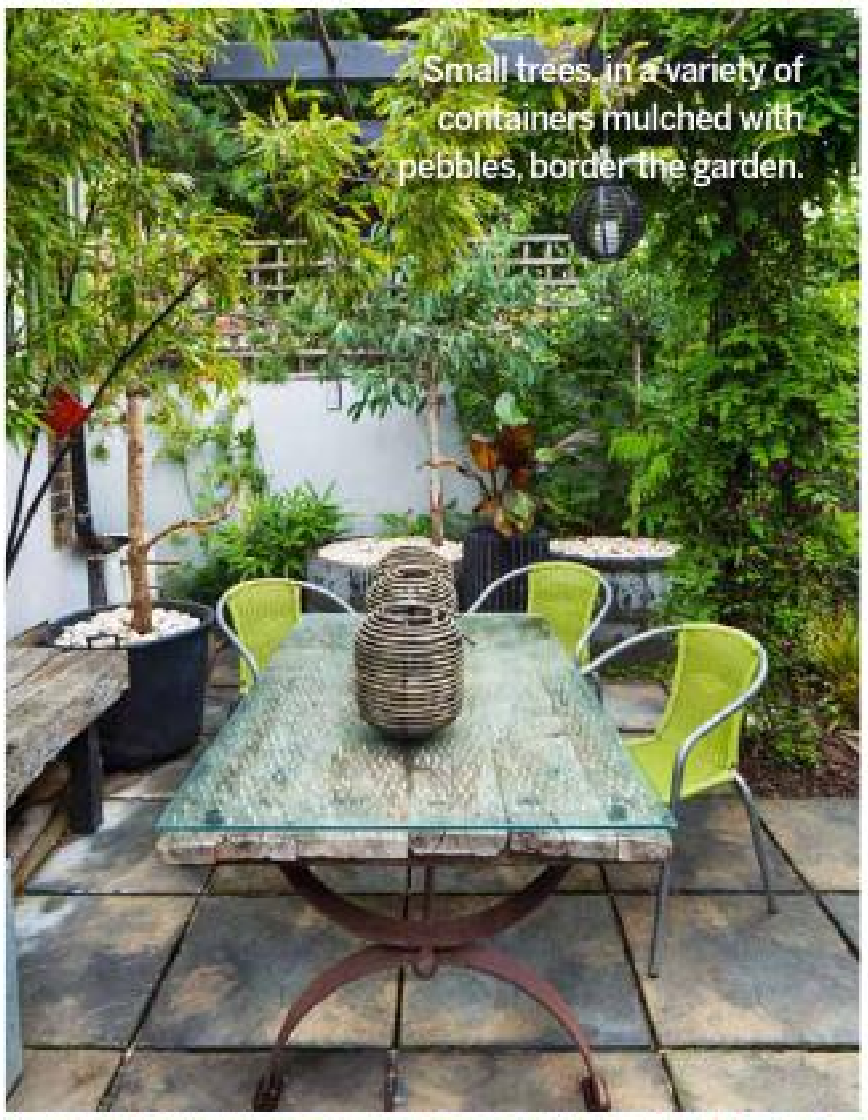
Courtyard serenity

Designer Spencer Viner has a garden that radiates calm, peace and luxury, despite measuring a mere eight metres square

WORDS **JOJO TULLOH** PHOTOGRAPHS **MARIANNE MAJERUS**



Concrete manholes stacked two deep and lined with an aquatic tub create a small pond. *Phyllostachys nigra* is in the foreground.



Small trees, in a variety of containers mulched with pebbles, border the garden.

A pot contains *Ensete ventricosum* 'Maurelii' with the purple *Wisteria floribunda* 'Yae-kokuryu' on the left.

Spencer Viner gardens on a grand scale – in miniature. His plot may be a mere eight metres square yet it is bordered by ten pleached limes and dappled with the shade of a variety of small trees. Spencer calls this style 'modern Kyoto'. In high summer dense and abundant foliage is held in check by the modernist formality of a grid-like pergola painted black, square beds and painted plywood circles fixed to the walls. This is a compact but highly realised courtyard garden in which Spencer successfully combines reclaimed materials and a variety of salvaged containers with a naturalistic woodland planting scheme.

Spencer transformed his "very ordinary" original fencing with a lining of marine-ply he then painted grey. His ten pollarded limes grow flat against these walls, their trunks forming evenly spaced verticals that recall the sliding paper doors of a traditional Japanese home. Behind an L-shaped bench made of western red cedar the shade is lightened by the silvery leaves of astelia, plumes of *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Ferner Osten' and clumps of the feathery deciduous grass *Hakonechloa macra*. The limbs of the Chinese dogwood *Cornus kousa* var. *chinensis* branch elegantly behind. Against the wall a circle of plywood painted red mimics the sun, while on the opposite wall is a similarly sized 'moon'.

At the centre of the garden is a square of decking, edged by a bench and surrounding a small square of gravel containing a weeping willow. The tree's rapacious, thirsty roots are contained by a large tub sunk underground and concealed beneath the decking; with a hard pruning every year the tree thrives but is kept in check. On either side are two beds filled with the heavy clay dug out when the decking was laid. This, mixed with

▷

KEY ELEMENTS

What Modern Japanese design elements mix with naturalistic woodland planting in the courtyard garden of owner/garden designer Spencer Viner.

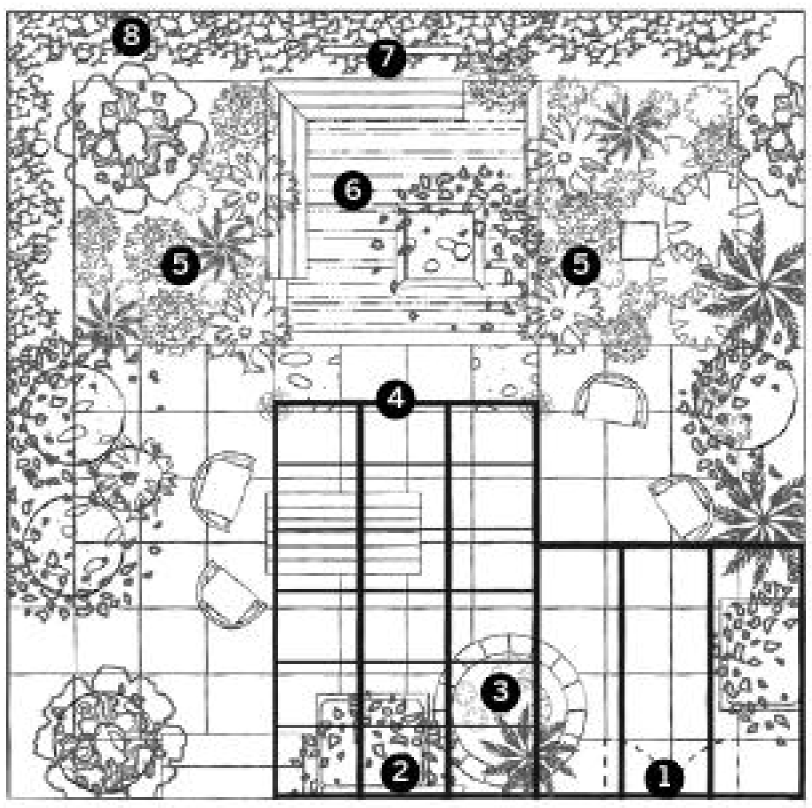
Where North London.

Size 8 metre square.

Soil Clay lightened with horticultural grit.

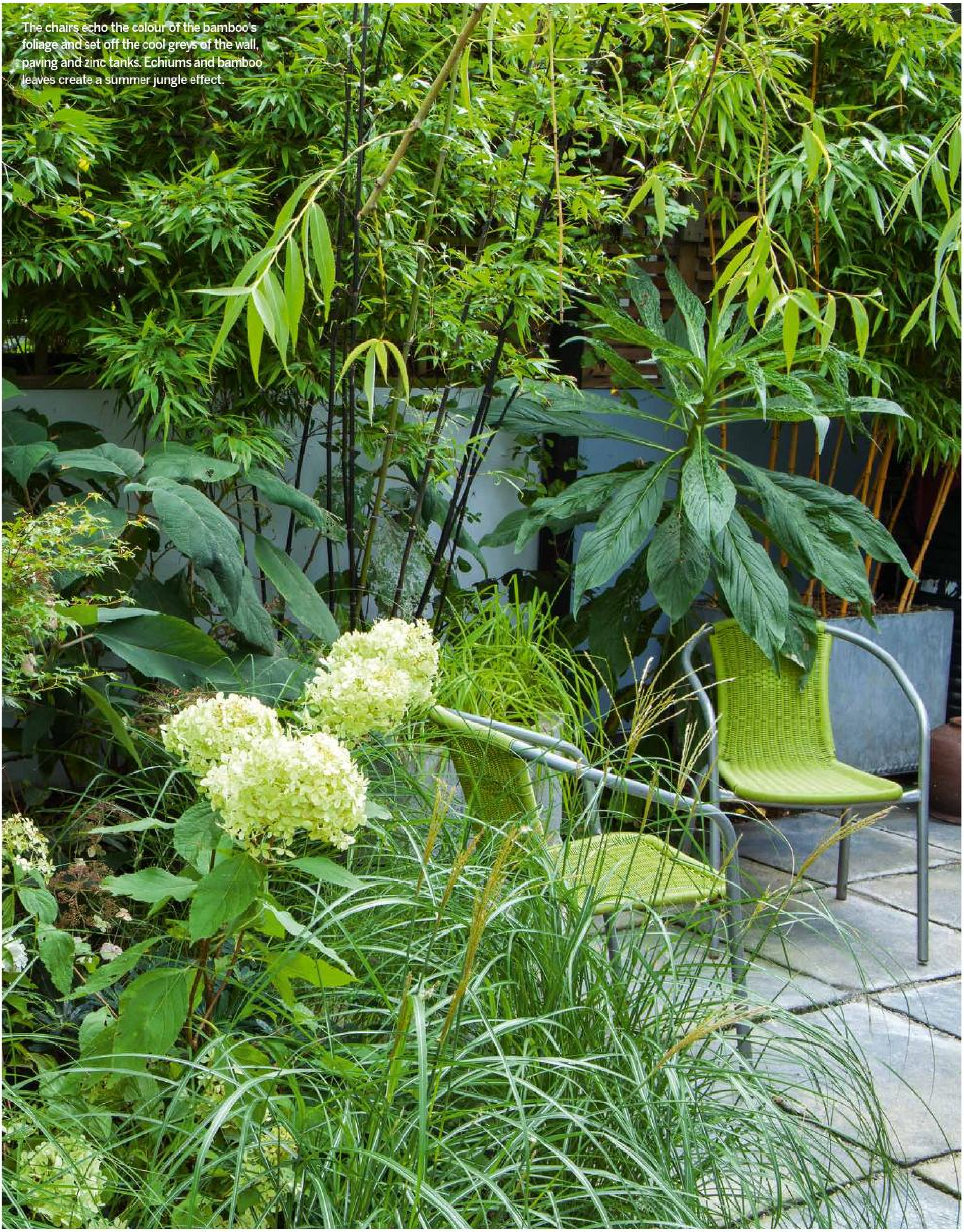
Special features Recycled concrete manholes make striking containers for a variety of small trees.

Designed by www.northeleven.co.uk

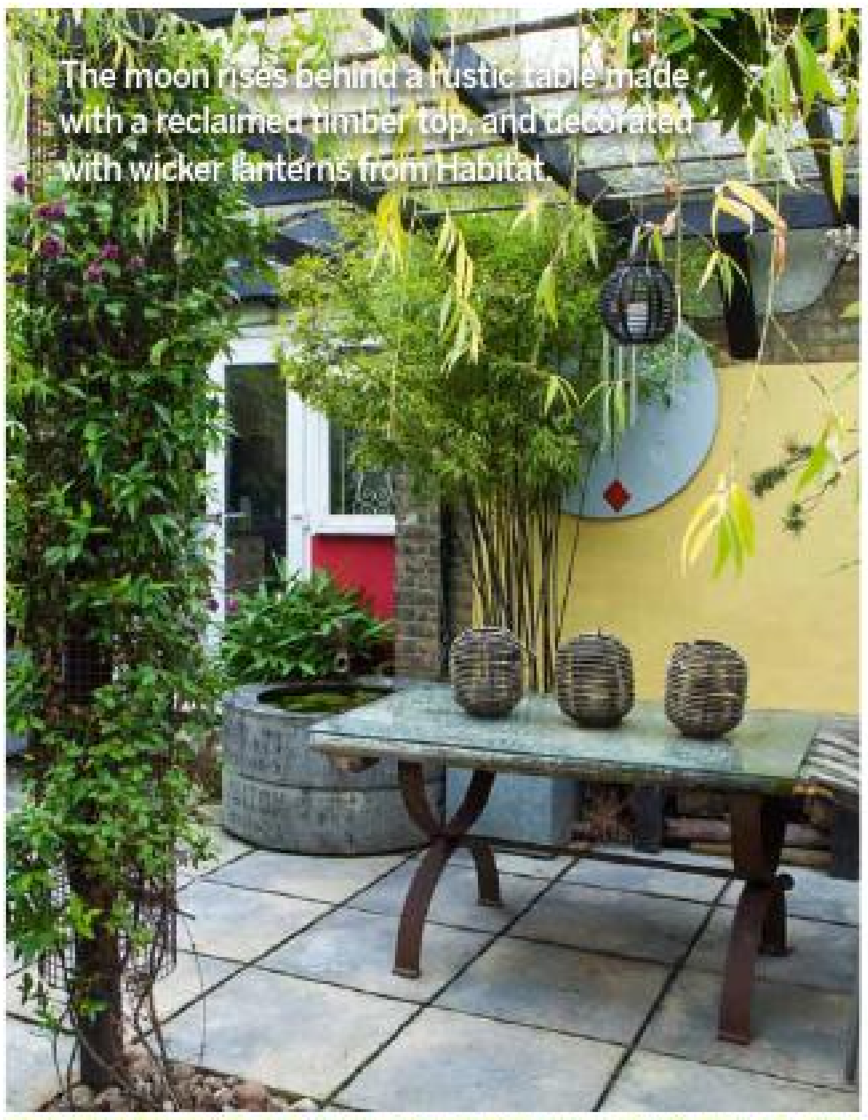


1 Door to kitchen
2 Moon
3 Lily pond
4 Pergola
5 Mixed woodland planting
6 Decked area
7 Sun
8 Pleached limes

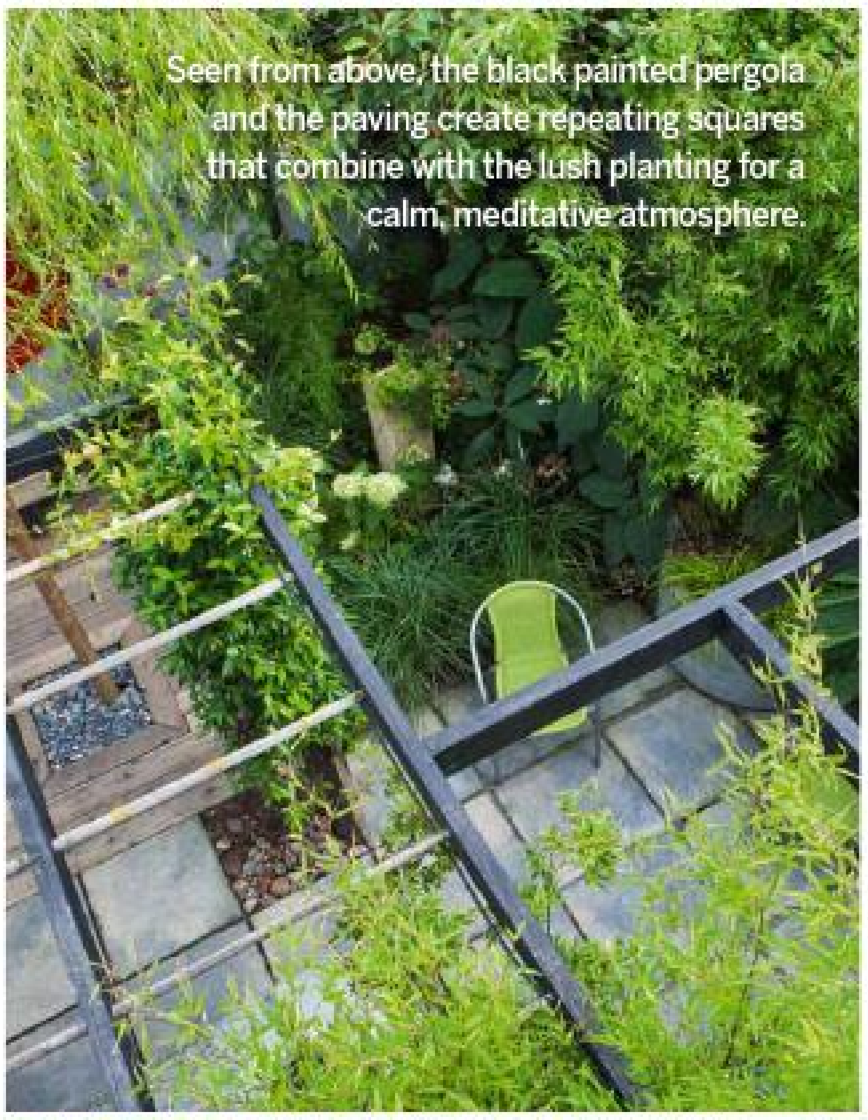
N



The chairs echo the colour of the bamboo's foliage and set off the cool greys of the wall, paving and zinc tanks. Echiums and bamboo leaves create a summer jungle effect.



The moon rises behind a rustic table made with a reclaimed timber top, and decorated with wicker lanterns from Habitat.



Seen from above, the black painted pergola and the paving create repeating squares that combine with the lush planting for a calm, meditative atmosphere.

An ordinary fence has been transformed by lining it with marine ply and painting it pale grey. A red plywood sun and pleached limes complete the Japanese effect.

A great example of the transformative power of knowledgeable planting in conjunction with imaginative design

▷ horticultural grit, created free-draining beds that are planted in a tiered woodland style. Spring colour comes from hellebores, crocus, *Fritillaria meleagris*, the pure white *Narcissus* 'Thalia' and a small *Magnolia* x *loebneri* 'Leonard Messel'. Christmas box provides scented flowers in winter and glossy dark evergreen leaves year round.

As the season progresses the courtyard turns lush and jungly; the frothy white heads of *Hydrangea arborescens* providing a good contrast to the prickly *Mahonia oiwakensis* subsp. *lomariifolia*. By late summer the beds are overflowing with grasses such as *Miscanthus* 'Morning Glory' and *Hakonechloa macra*. Beneath the pergola are two columns with galvanised steel wire rolled around them. These provide a mesh against which *Wisteria*, *Trachelospermum jasminoides* and *Clematis viticella* flourish.

One of the most striking elements of this garden are the circular concrete manholes, lined to contain both trees and water. In one grows a eucalyptus, in another a Scots pine pruned in a Japanese style, in yet another an olive. Other trees in this garden include a copper hazel and the very charming non-fruiting cherry *Prunus* 'Accolade'. Spencer pollards all his trees to keep them small, and in doing so he creates an effect that is ambitious yet achievable – a sort of souped-up bonsai. But even with careful pruning the hottest left-hand corner has had to be replanted with more shade-loving plants as the canopy has thickened.

Spencer uses a variety of materials to mulch the pots. In one, poppies grow through pebbles in an effect reminiscent of Beth Chatto's gravel garden. Over by the French windows the same manholes have been topped with slate and filled with an aquatic tub to create a small pond, complete with goldfish and water lilies, and a bamboo spout through which water trickles. Dotted around the garden are old water tanks containing the arching canes of black and golden bamboos (*Phyllostachys nigra* and *P. vivax* f. *aureocaulis*).

The spareness of the design is the perfect backdrop for the huge variety of leaf shapes. A calm atmosphere is achieved, helped by small details such as the concrete paving slabs chiselled away along one edge to create a water line effect, while the wind sounds the chimes hanging from the pergola. It may be two minutes walk from the North Circular but this garden feels like a haven, a great example of the transformative power of knowledgeable planting in conjunction with imaginative design. □

TOP TIPS

Spencer Viner offers his ideas for maximising limited space

1 Be ambitious but be disciplined, limit yourself to one overall idea. In Spencer's case a Japanese aesthetic is the guiding principle.

2 Use a designer however small your space. Let them help you decide on the look you want and more importantly stick to it.

3 Contain larger shrubs and small trees in tubs or containers either above or below ground.

4 Coppice and pollard trees heavily for dense yet controlled planting.

5 Use reclaimed materials to give the garden an instant 'earthy' weathered appeal. Use a variety of pebbles and mulching materials.

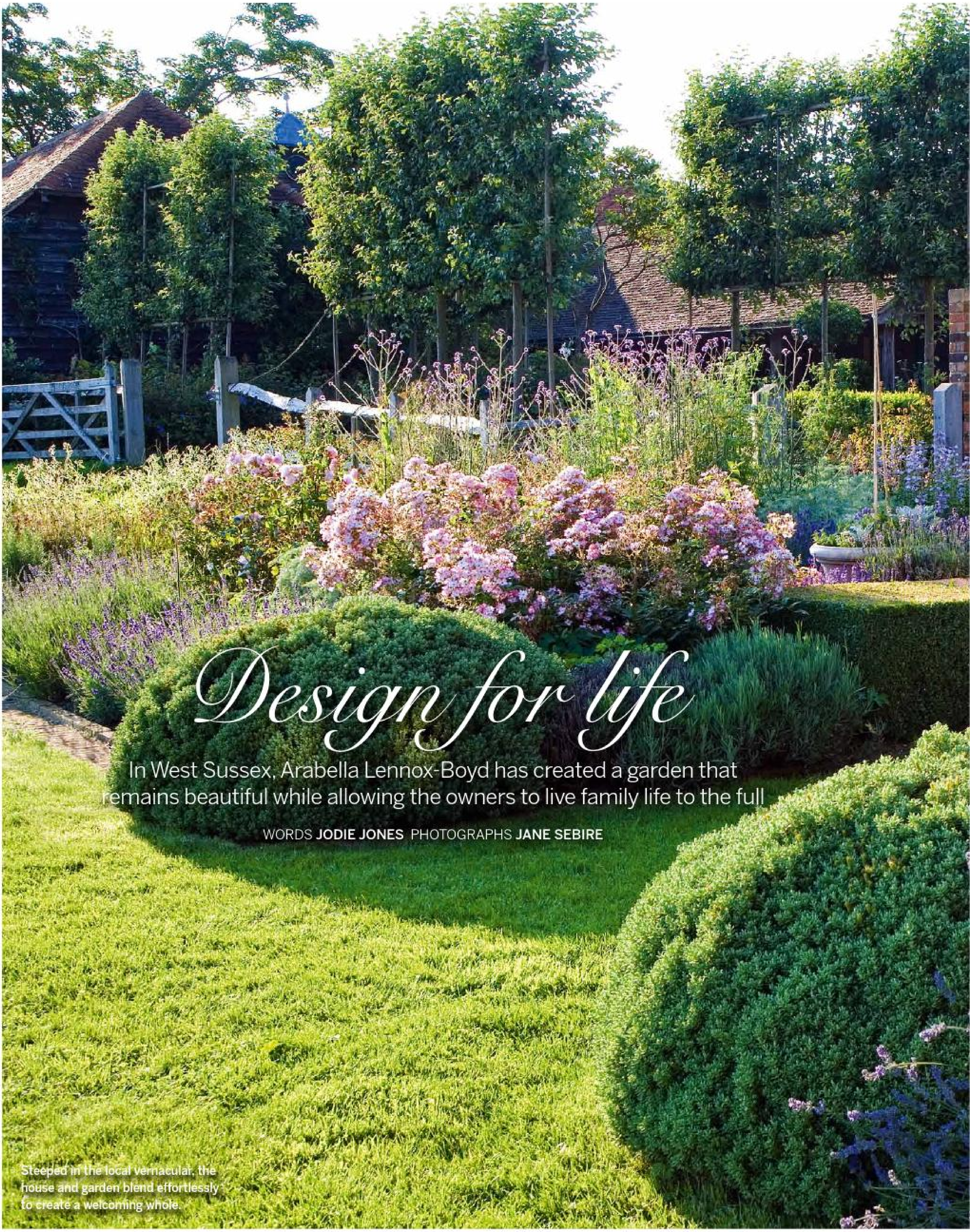
6 Plant containers successionally for year-round interest.

7 Use all the senses – in this garden sound is important. Wind chimes, the rustle of bamboo leaves and the trickle of water from a bamboo spout enhance this garden's atmosphere.

8 Repeat motifs, in this case grids and circles.

9 Plant for winter shapes – teasels stand out against the walls when summer colour has faded.

10 Work with what you have rather than replacing everything. Chisel concrete slabs to create a rippled 'waterline' effect. As your garden matures you may need to replant it with more shade-loving plants.



Design for life

In West Sussex, Arabella Lennox-Boyd has created a garden that remains beautiful while allowing the owners to live family life to the full

WORDS **JODIE JONES** PHOTOGRAPHS **JANE SEBIRE**

Steeped in the local vernacular, the house and garden blend effortlessly to create a welcoming whole.

In brief

What Private family garden.
Where West Sussex.
Size 3 acres of gardens within 12 acres of parkland.
Climate Mean annual temperatures in the region vary from around 8°C to just over 10°C. The property resides in a frost pocket.
Soil Heavy clay.
Points of interest Relaxed family garden that blends successfully with surrounding countryside.

Swings and a trampoline are not features you expect to find in a garden created by Arabella Lennox-Boyd. The grande dame of high-end design is more often associated with lavish estates of understated grandeur than relaxed and informal family gardens.

"But that is what I love about this garden," says Arabella. "It echoes the way the owners live. They are real country people and their house and style are so easy, so un-grand. Everything is very comfortable.

"When I first visited them, back in 2004, there was little garden to speak of but I was instantly struck by the beauty of the position. I very strongly felt that whatever we did had to belong to the landscape."

Her first action was to relocate the long approach to the house. The original straight tarmac drive was dug out and turfed to create a secret green lane leading past the tennis court and housekeeper's cottage to the house. Now, visiting cars sweep up a gentle slope along an avenue of *Prunus avium* 'Plena' that conceals the house from sight until the very last minute.

"It is an obsession with me to create a proper approach, ending in a secluded area where cars can be parked out of sight of the house. It is all part of settling the garden into its surroundings." The new driveway skirts a mini wildflower meadow and ends in a gravel courtyard. From here, visitors can choose their route. One path leads to the shady front garden where white lilacs are followed by white rugosa roses 'Blanche Double de Coubert' and rows of clipped box balls lead to the front door.

The alternative route is a mown grass path that runs along the crab apple allée to a wooden gate flanked by clipped *Rosmarinus officinalis* 'Miss Jessopp's Upright' and on to a stone and brick terrace wrapping the back of the house. This is the heart of the garden, a sheltered suntrap planted with masses of roses, including 'Felicia' and 'Ferdinand Pichard' and various lavenders – 'Imperial Gem', 'Hidcote' – together with santolina, cistus, oregano and other sun lovers.

Off the south terrace, tucked away round the side of the house, is a little woodland garden, very dry and shady, with hellebores, ferns, *Ribes sanguineum* White Icicle (= 'Ubric') and a sweet little lemon-yellow

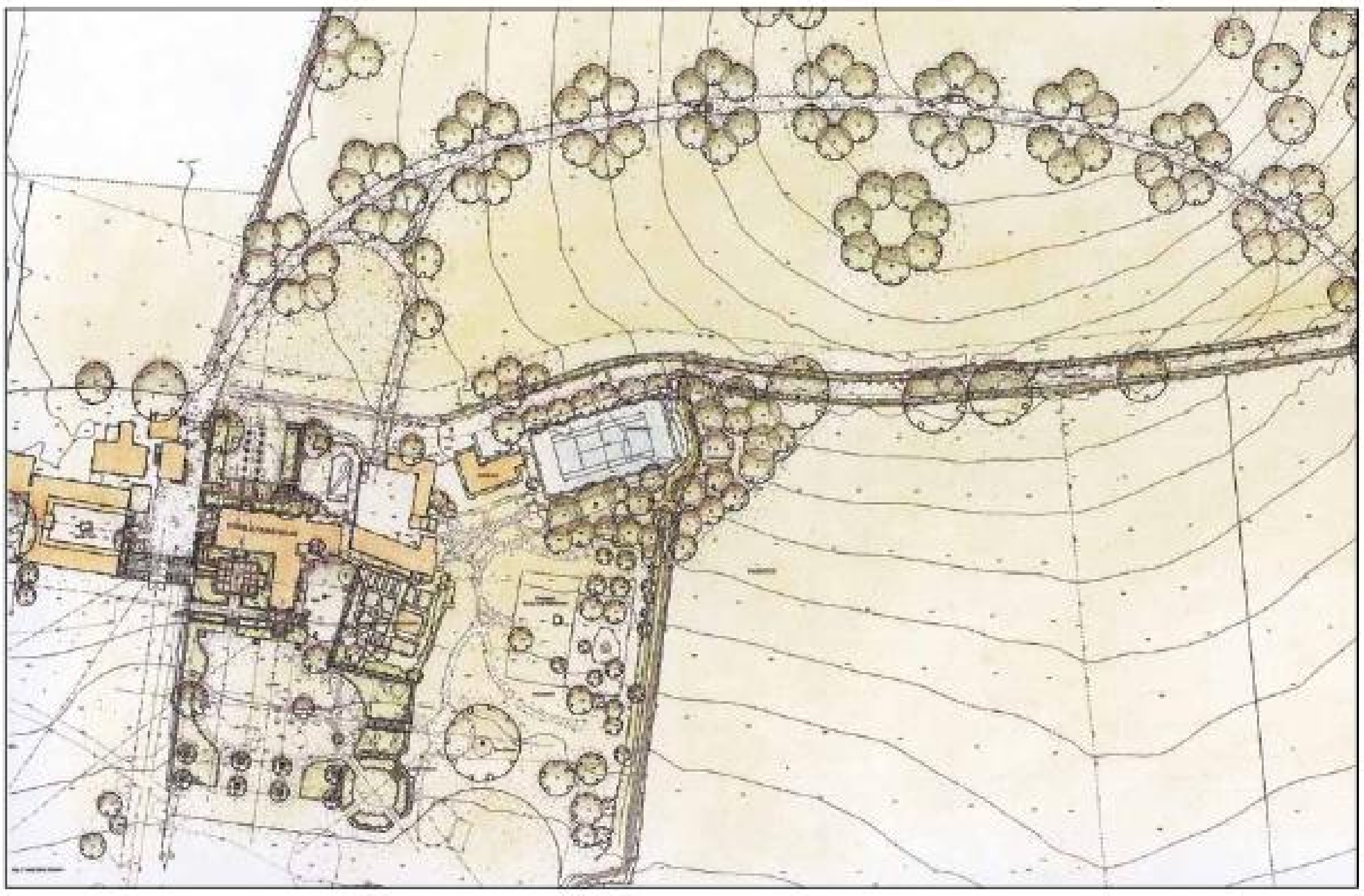
Continued on page 50 ▷

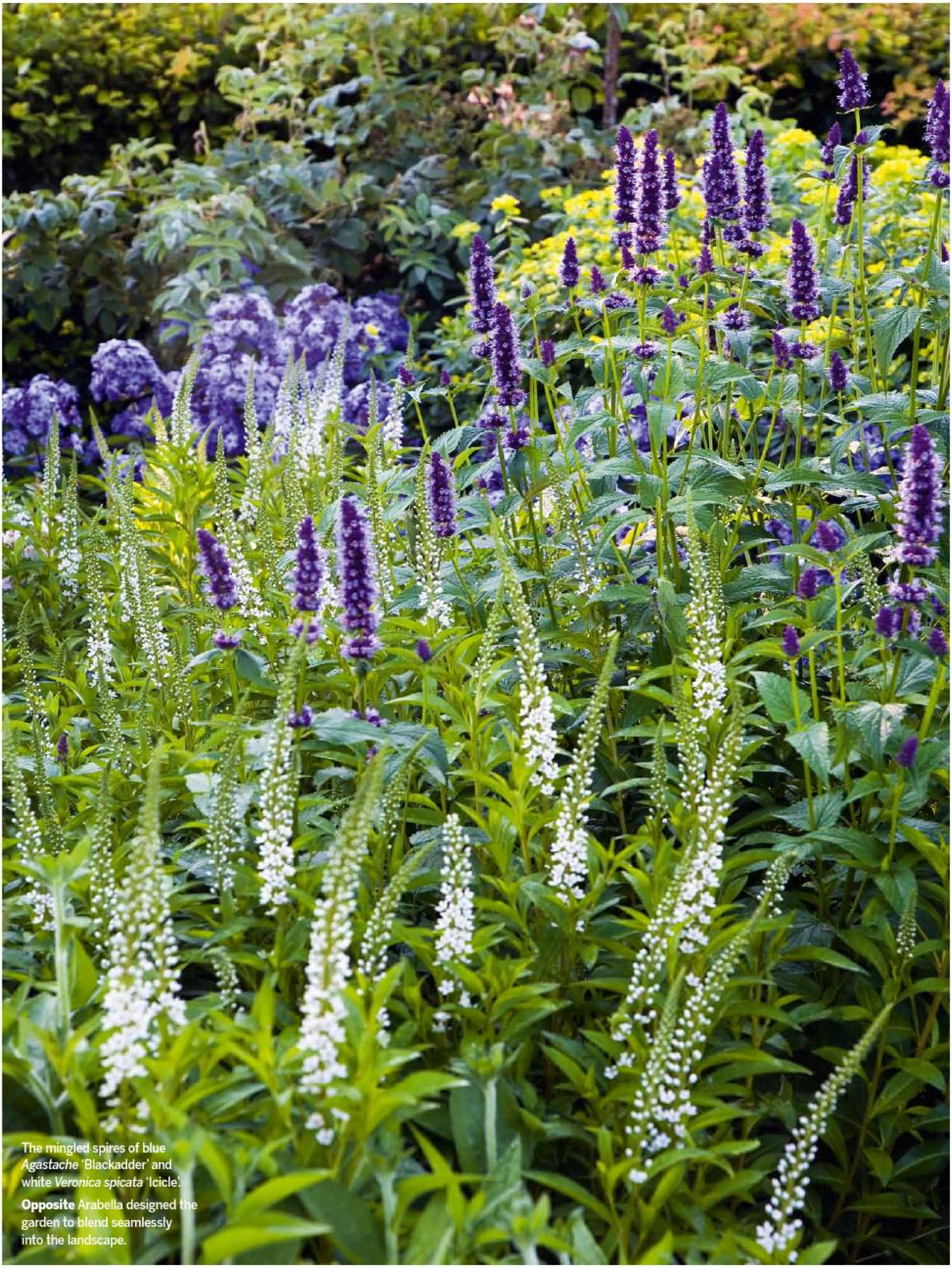
Top left The south-facing terrace is a dreamy haze of soft pink and lavender, with a view extending to the countryside.

Top right Pleached crab apples and cleft oak fences introduce an element of informal geometry.

Bottom left In the main border Arabella has used grasses with perennial plantings to create a heightened meadow effect.

Bottom right The miniature Romany caravan provides a playhouse for the children, complete with a tiny cabin bed.





The mingled spires of blue *Agastache* 'Blackadder' and white *Veronica spicata* 'Icicle'.

Opposite Arabella designed the garden to blend seamlessly into the landscape.

The life that is lived within this garden will always take precedence over the garden itself

▷ wendy house with curtains at the windows. And beyond that you come to the working part of the garden – an orchard, vegetable garden and large henhouse.

But wherever you go, your eye is drawn back to the view, which rises up away from the house as the garden falls gently to meet it. From the main south terrace, shallow steps lead to a large lawn flanked by informal borders that combine herbaceous planting with grasses and species roses. "I am not keen on all ornamental grasses," says Arabella. "*Miscanthus* can get very thick and overpowering, although it can provide a wonderful visual full stop. And I love *Stipa gigantea*, and the pennisetums and deschampsia – so feathery and light!"

Here they blend with *Gaura lindheimeri*, poppies and campanulas to create a sort of heightened meadow that complements the surrounding countryside. "I like to keep the planting harmonious," says Arabella. "I like soft blues and pinks. Not too many jarring colours, although a touch of red, perhaps from *Rosa* 'Wilhelm', can add real vibrancy." Framing these beds is a large lawn, punctuated by a small set piece planting of four *Malus domestica* 'Cox's Orange Pippin', each emerging from a cushiony mound of *Hebe subalpina*, one of Arabella's trademarks.

Only one area of planting does not take the surroundings into account, and that is the octagonal rose garden, enclosed by clipped beech hedges. It is unashamedly romantic, with masses of *Rosa* 'Felicia', *Nepeta racemosa* 'Walker's Low', hardy geraniums, *Stachys byzantina* and *Alchemilla mollis*. "I know the ground here is difficult, so I put in strong performers," says Arabella.

Glimpsed through openings in the hedge, the horses in the adjoining paddock hang their heads over a cleft oak fence, which forms a line across the end of the lawn, before veering in an arc for the trampoline.

The landscaping had been finalised, including the location of a picturesque little Romany caravan, when the owners' children successfully petitioned for the trampoline. It is a tangible indication that the life that is lived within this garden will always take precedence over the garden itself.

Bucolic and dreamy it certainly is, but never precious. At heart this is simply the ultimate embodiment of a down-to-earth family garden. □

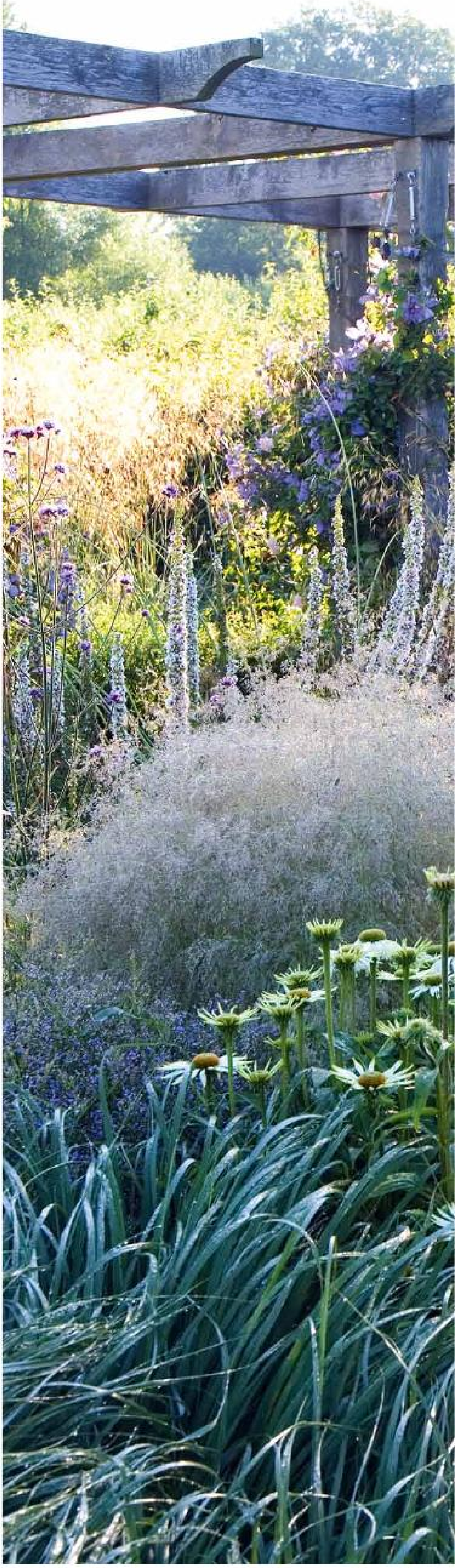
USEFUL INFORMATION

You can see more of Arabella's work online.

Tel 020 7931 9995/6

Website www.arabellalennoxboyd.com

Continued on page 52 ▷



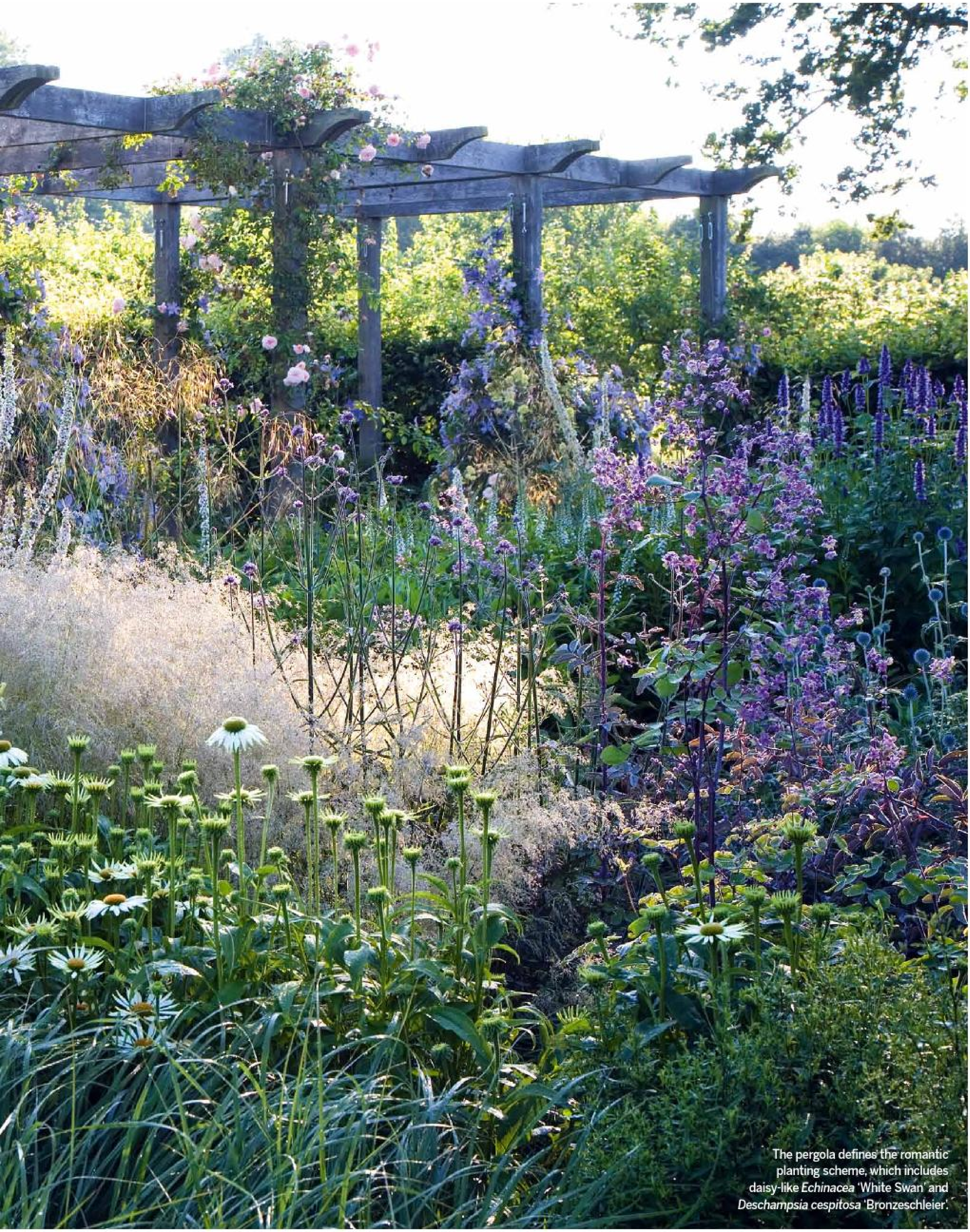
Key planting combinations

The green-tinged white daisy-like flowers of *Echinacea* 'White Swan' (see right) provide a calm punctuation mark against a frothy sea of self-seeding *Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Bronzeschleier'. Behind this airy mass, *Verbena bonariensis*, *Echinops bannaticus* 'Taplow Blue' and *Agastache* 'Blackadder' paint a sweep of cool lavender leading to the gently charming *Thalictrum delavayi*.

Arabella generally prefers soft colour schemes in muted shades, such as a pretty combination of clear blue *Geranium* Rozanne (= 'Gerwat'), grey-leaved *Stachys byzantina* and soft pink *Rosa* 'Felicia'. White lilies, pink crinums and soft crimson hollyhocks add to the cottage-garden romance of this scheme, enclosed within the beech hedges of the rose garden.

On the sun-baked south terrace, the planting forms an exuberant mass in high summer. Silvery *Artemisia* 'Powis Castle' and the iridescent flowers of *Penstemon* 'Sour Grapes' seem to shimmer in the sunlight against a generous swathe of *Rosa* 'Ballerina'. A cloud of swaying *Verbena bonariensis* and *Gaura lindheimeri* is set off by the main lawn.

Though her planting palette is generally muted, Arabella does include occasional splashes of strong colour. The eye is drawn to a large clump of *Helenium* 'Moerheim Beauty', looking even more boldly red alongside white *Gypsophila paniculata* 'Bristol Fairy'. A band of *Achillea* 'Terracotta' in front echoes the russet tones of *Stipa gigantea* and *Cephalaria gigantea*.



The pergola defines the romantic planting scheme, which includes daisy-like *Echinacea* 'White Swan' and *Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Bronzeschleier'.

9 of Arabella's plants for summer appeal

1 *Thalictrum delavayi*
The meadow rue is a very pretty plant that I like to use wherever the soil is moist and humus-rich enough. USDA 5a-8b[†].

2 *Verbascum chaixii* 'Album'
Quite tough and seeds itself freely, but in my experience is not a nuisance. This cultivar has white flowers with a mauve eye. RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.

3 *Malus* 'Evereste'
I love crab apples because they pleach so well and quickly establish great character. AGM*. RHS H4, USDA 4a-8b.

4 *Gaura lindheimeri*
A lovely plant for those who can grow it, which mainly means gardeners in the south of England. AGM. RHS H3, USDA 6a-9b.

5 *Rosa* 'Wilhelm'
I love a touch of red so I often use this modern shrub rose for an injection of colour.

6 *Agastache* 'Blackadder'
This comes back year after year and I love it. I grow it in Lancashire where the weather can be dreadful but it does very well for me. USDA 6a-9b.

7 *Cephalaria gigantea*
More than deserving its 'giant' label, this can throw its creamy yellow flower heads nearly 2m high on waving stems. RHS H4, USDA 3a-9b.

8 *Stipa gigantea*
Not all ornamental grasses perform well, but this is wonderful – so delicate. I love the way it moves in the wind. AGM. RHS H4.

9 *Helenium* 'Moerheim Beauty'
Another good choice for a splash of strong colour lasting several months. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 4a-8b.

Design elements

The Gypsy Caravan Company produces a range of caravans, including a child's model similar to the one in this garden. Prices from £7,500 new, £3,500 second hand (01953 681995, www.gypsycaravancompany.co.uk).

The cleft oak fencing and all the gates were made by Philip Juniper (www.philipjuniper.co.uk) who works in Sussex, Surrey, Hampshire and Kent.

The pots on the terrace are available from Arabella, and can be ordered in sizes from 20cm to 1.4m diameter (prices on application). For further information on these and other terracotta pots designed by Arabella, contact Christina Hemmett on 020 7931 9995 or visit www.arabellalennoxboyd.com/products

A well-chosen building can be both an ornament and a practical addition to the garden. The Posh Shed Company (01544 387101, www.theposhshedcompany.co.uk) offers a good range from £1,800, and can produce bespoke designs and sizes as well.

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*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
[†]Hardiness ratings given where available.

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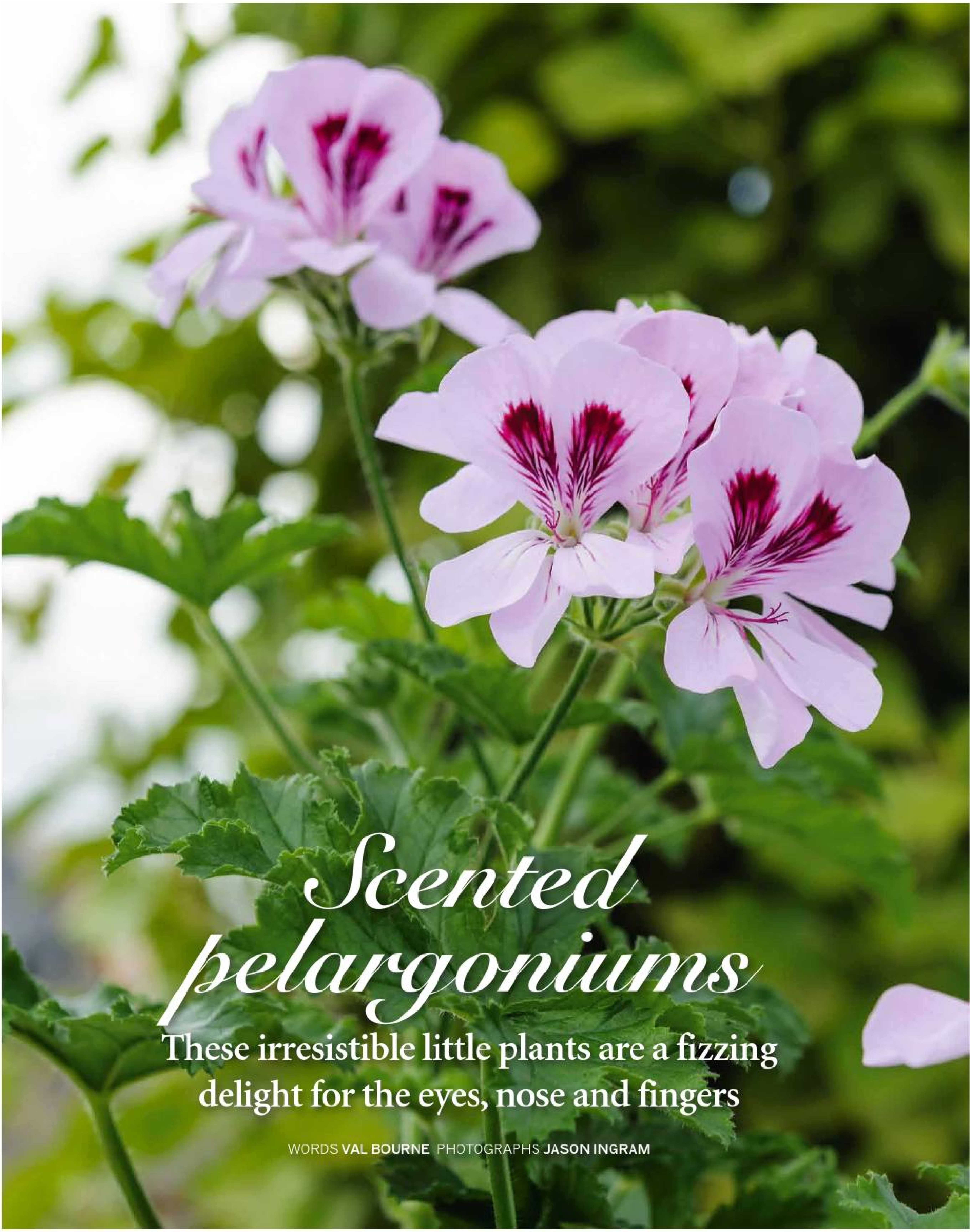


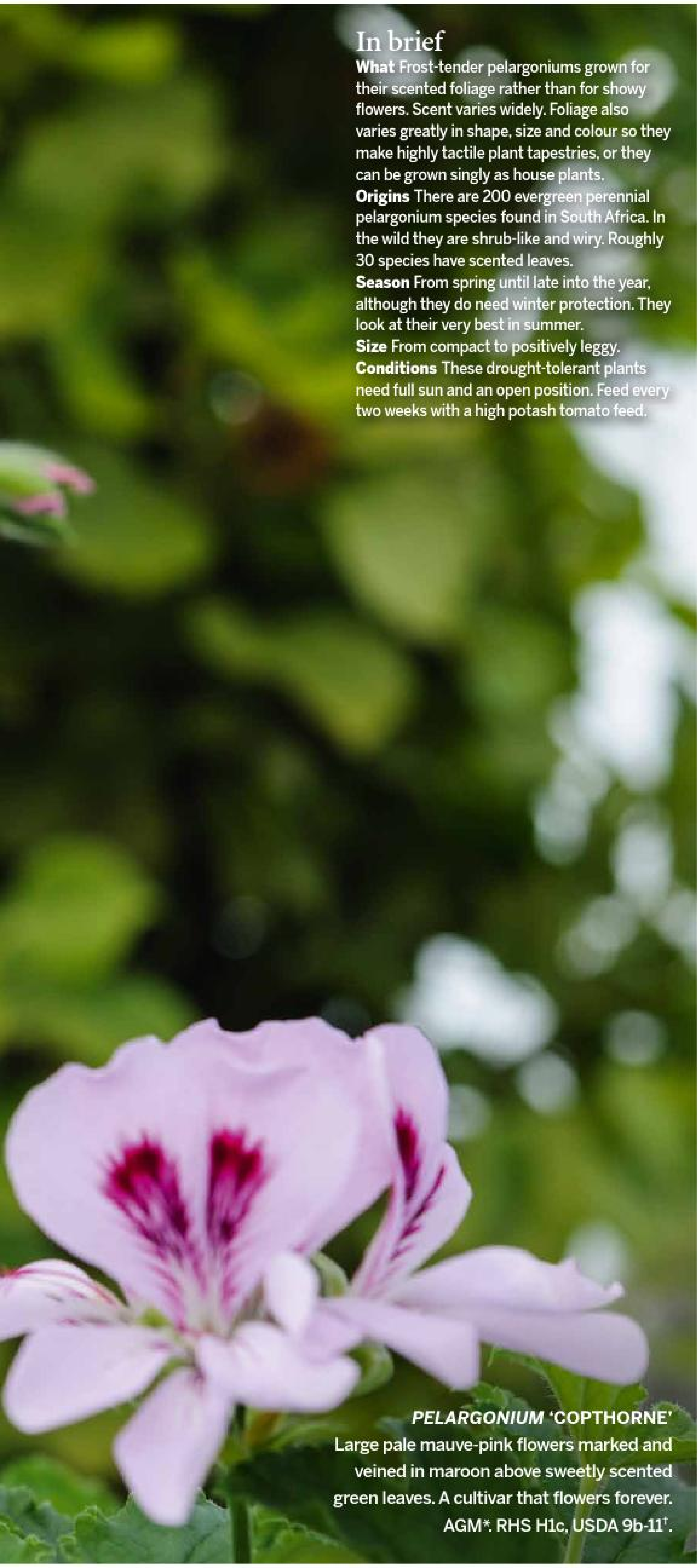
Scented pelargoniums

These irresistible little plants are a fizzing delight for the eyes, nose and fingers

WORDS **VAL BOURNE** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

In brief

What Frost-tender pelargoniums grown for their scented foliage rather than for showy flowers. Scent varies widely. Foliage also varies greatly in shape, size and colour so they make highly tactile plant tapestries, or they can be grown singly as house plants.
Origins There are 200 evergreen perennial pelargonium species found in South Africa. In the wild they are shrub-like and wiry. Roughly 30 species have scented leaves.
Season From spring until late into the year, although they do need winter protection. They look at their very best in summer.
Size From compact to positively leggy.
Conditions These drought-tolerant plants need full sun and an open position. Feed every two weeks with a high potash tomato feed.



***PELARGONIUM* 'COPTHORNE'**
Large pale mauve-pink flowers marked and veined in maroon above sweetly scented green leaves. A cultivar that flowers forever. AGM*. RHS H1c, USDA 9b-11†.

Val Bourne is an award-winning garden writer, photographer and lecturer. She gardens in the windswept Cotswolds

I think I must have been addicted to sherbert dabs as a small child, those tempting yellow tubes with the liquorice straws poking out of the top, because I can't resist the fizzy pungency of scented-leaved pelargoniums. I just have to fondle their tactile leaves and then inhale. I've got a large collection, some mingling together in pots and some neatly labelled specimen plants with evocative names like 'Nervous Mabel', 'Lavender Lindy' and 'Islington Peppermint'. They each have their own distinctive smell and I can find rose, soap, orange, cinnamon, peppermint, apple and lemon in my outdoor pantry. When the weather's hot I don't even have to squeeze the leaves to catch the scent, and these drought-tolerant plants come in all sorts of leafy textures, from highly divided, to lobed to fully round. They please the eye from May until October, surviving with scant watering in the sunniest of hotspots, and I can keep them year after year.

Scented-leaved pelargoniums tend to be hardier than larger flowered, highly-bred pelargoniums. Most will overwinter easily in a greenhouse supplied with a frost-breaking heater. Their tough constitution, honed by the rugged climate of South Africa's Cape where most of the 250 or so species are found, is the key to their popularity. They began garden life in the orangeries of the rich in the 17th century, but they were soon passed over cottage garden fences. Some 20 cultivars went to North America with the settlers in 1790 and 100 years later there were over 120 named cultivars. However, it was the Victorians who bred and collected them avidly. The rose and lemon-scented 'Graveolens' perfumed rooms in every suburban villa – a living, lacy-leafed pot pourri that I can remember my grandmother growing.

The pungent foliage, which can give you a headache if you overindulge, evolved as a natural defence against animals, wind and sun in the scrubby South African ▷

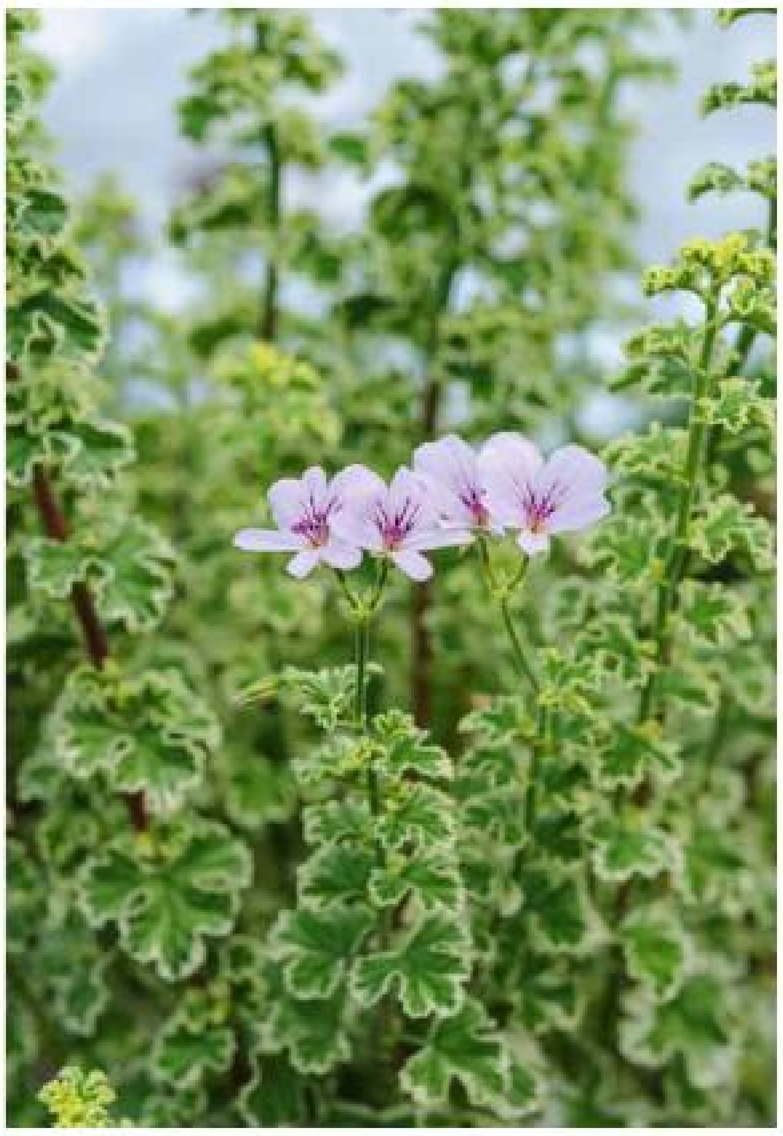
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society. †Hardiness ratings given where available.

▷ landscape. At first herbalists were convinced that the leaves would contain potent medicinal substances, but this hasn't been the case, although they are used as astringents. The only commercial use is the extraction of geranium oil for perfumery and aromatherapy, though you can also use the leaves in recipes. The rose-scented 'Attar of Roses' (see page 59) was added to jelly, cream and posset (a flavoured cream).

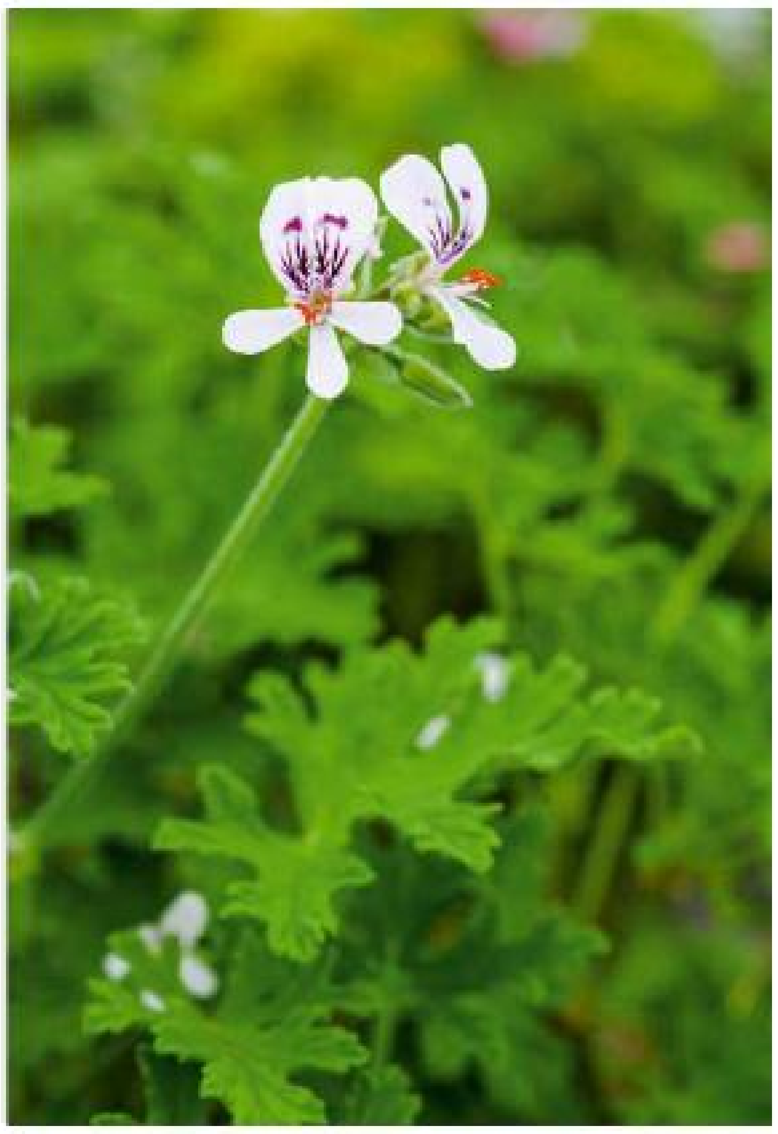
All the named plants we grow are derived from species found naturally. Mint-scented cultivars have *Pelargonium tomentosum* (page 59) in their breeding line. This soft-leaved species has felty leaves that suffer in bright sun, so treat minty soft-leaved pelargoniums differently from others and give them dappled shade instead. Some of the rose-scented cultivars draw on *P. capitatum* while the citrus-scented cultivars often contain the lime-scented *P.* 'Nervosum', or the apple-scented *P. odoratissimum*. Others smell of pine and turpentine and are normally described, rather kindly, as pungent. Most have small, darkly veined, dainty flowers in either mauve, pink or white, held on long stems. These are adored by hoverflies and bees, but do not make a huge impact on the eye. Perhaps the daintiest of all is the two-tone blood-red and white 'Islington Peppermint'.

It's the foliage that matters most, whether it's the finely divided cream and green leaves of 'Lady Plymouth', or the soft-green lobed leaves of 'Attar of Roses'. I use 'Attar of Roses' in a large terracotta pot containing the semi-double blue *Hibiscus syriacus* Blue Chiffon (= 'Notwood3') to add interest before the late-August hibiscus flowers appear. Pushed into a sheltered niche in winter, the pelargoniums often grow back from the base after a normal winter. Mostly I plant a mixture in galvanised troughs and buckets, with holes drilled into the bottom. The gunmetal grey suits the cool-pink or mauve flowers and sets off the foliage. My collection of single specimens is used on my plant theatre, after the auriculas have gone. Others adorn the low stone walls. ☐

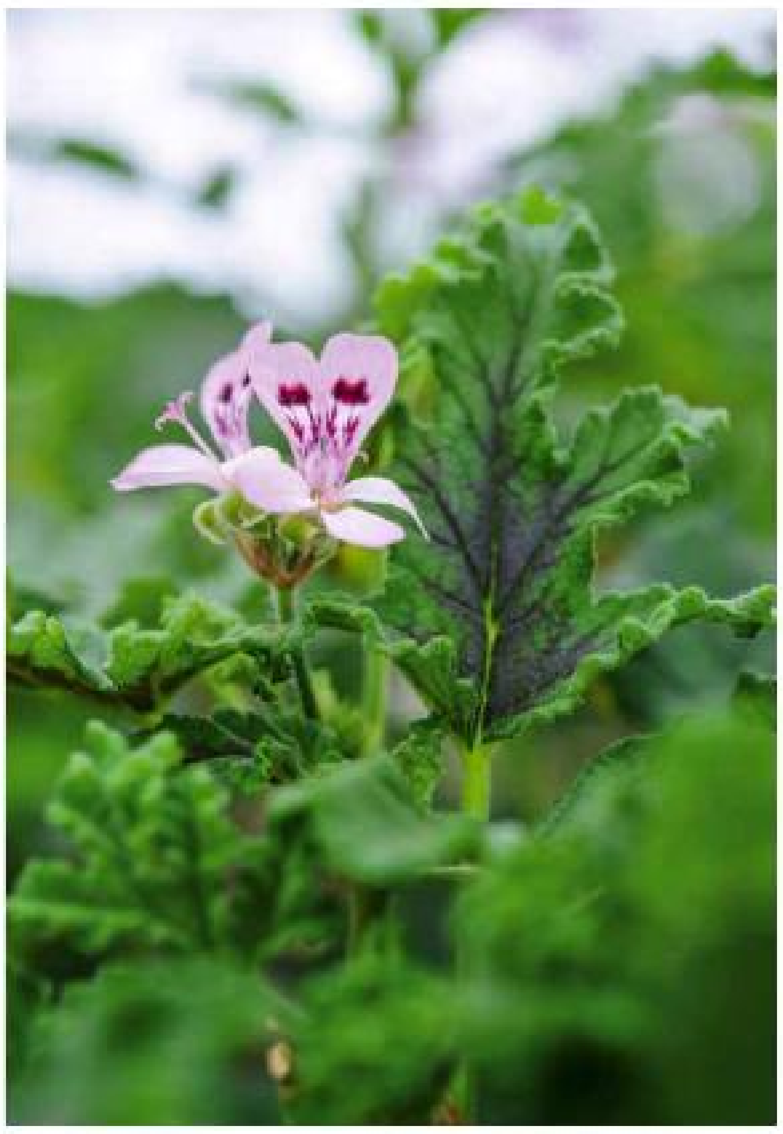
• Val's pick of scented pelargoniums continues over the next six pages.



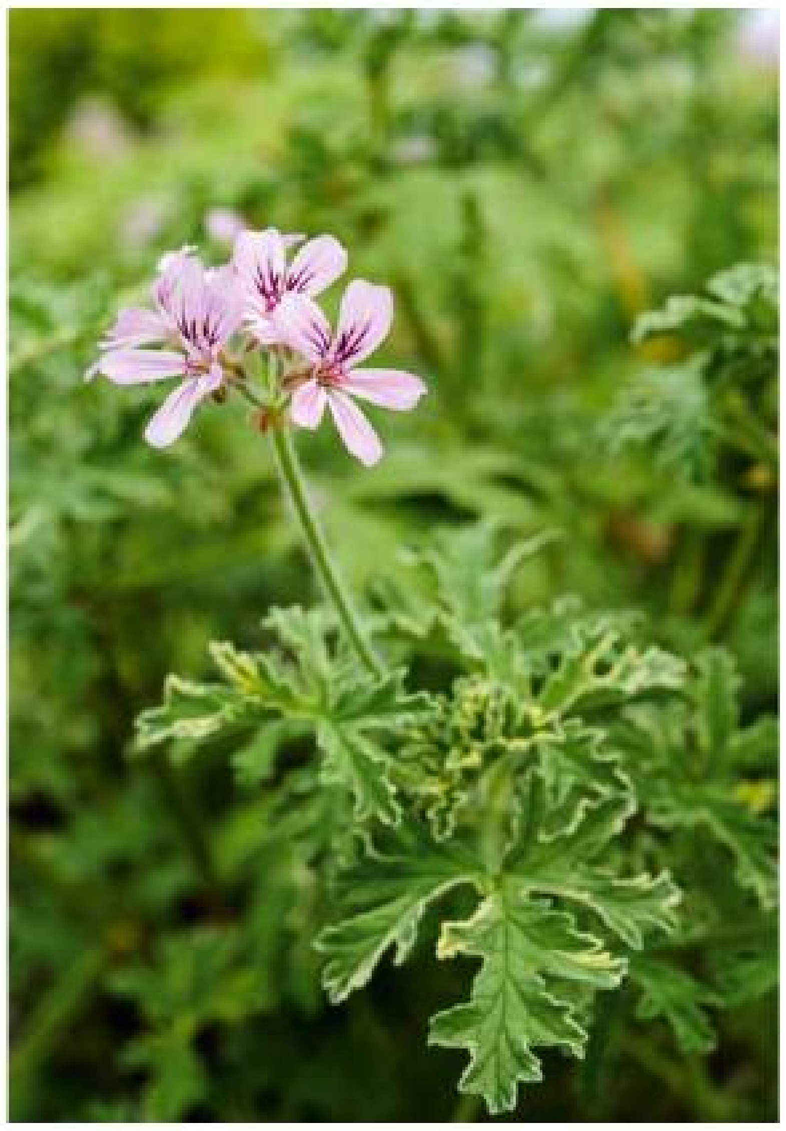
PELARGONIUM CRISPUM **'VARIEGATUM'**
Tiny ivy-like leaves with a dark-green middle crisply edged in clotted-cream. Smells of lemon with pale-pink flowers veined in purple. Upright, so good at poking through other plants. AGM. RHS H1c, USDA 9b-11.



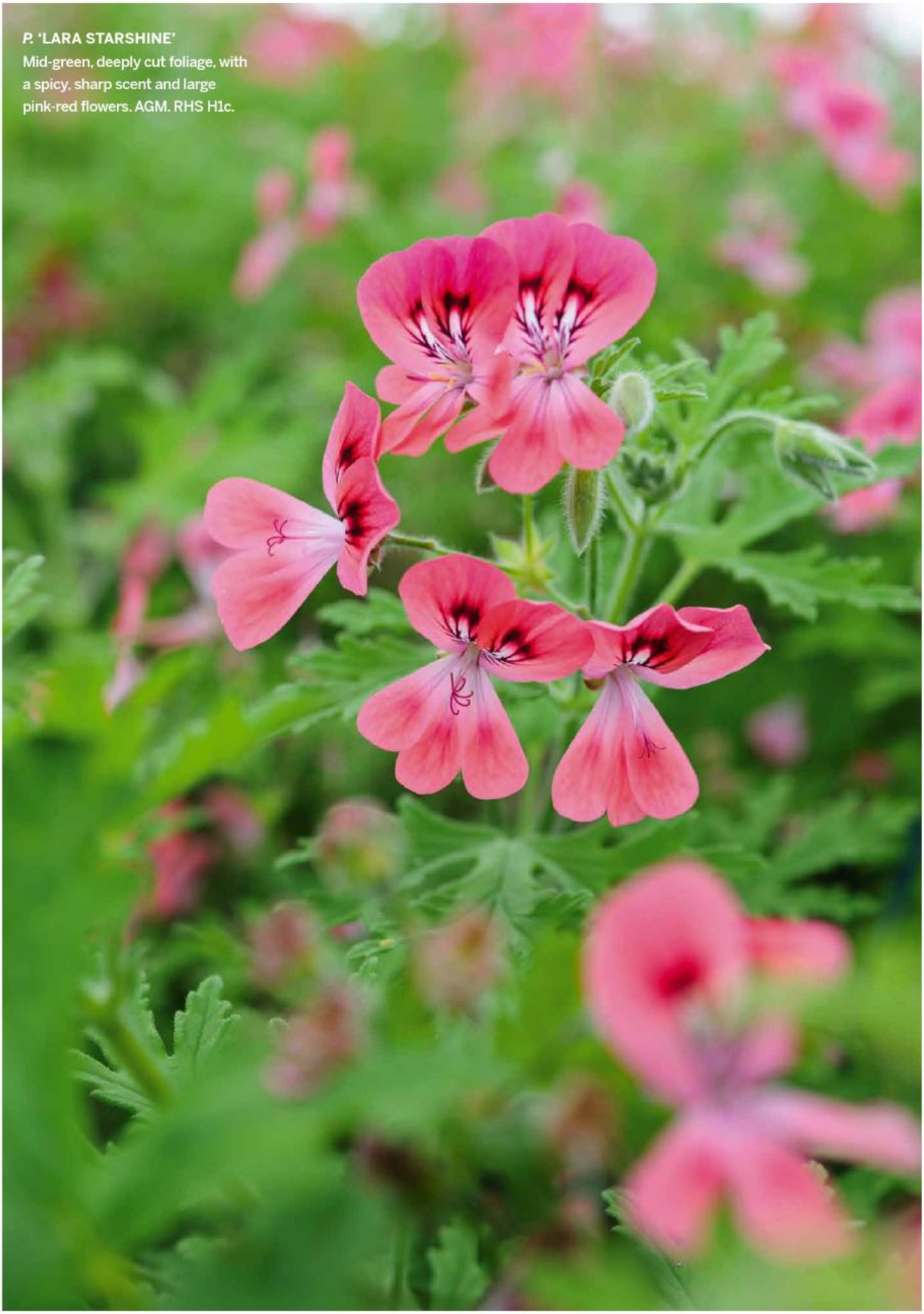
P. **'GRAVEOLENS'**
The most common scented-leaved pelargonium. Tall upright, with very divided leaves that smell of rose-lemon, topped with tiny mauve-pink flowers that look rather like miniature pansies. A huge plant. USDA 10a-11.



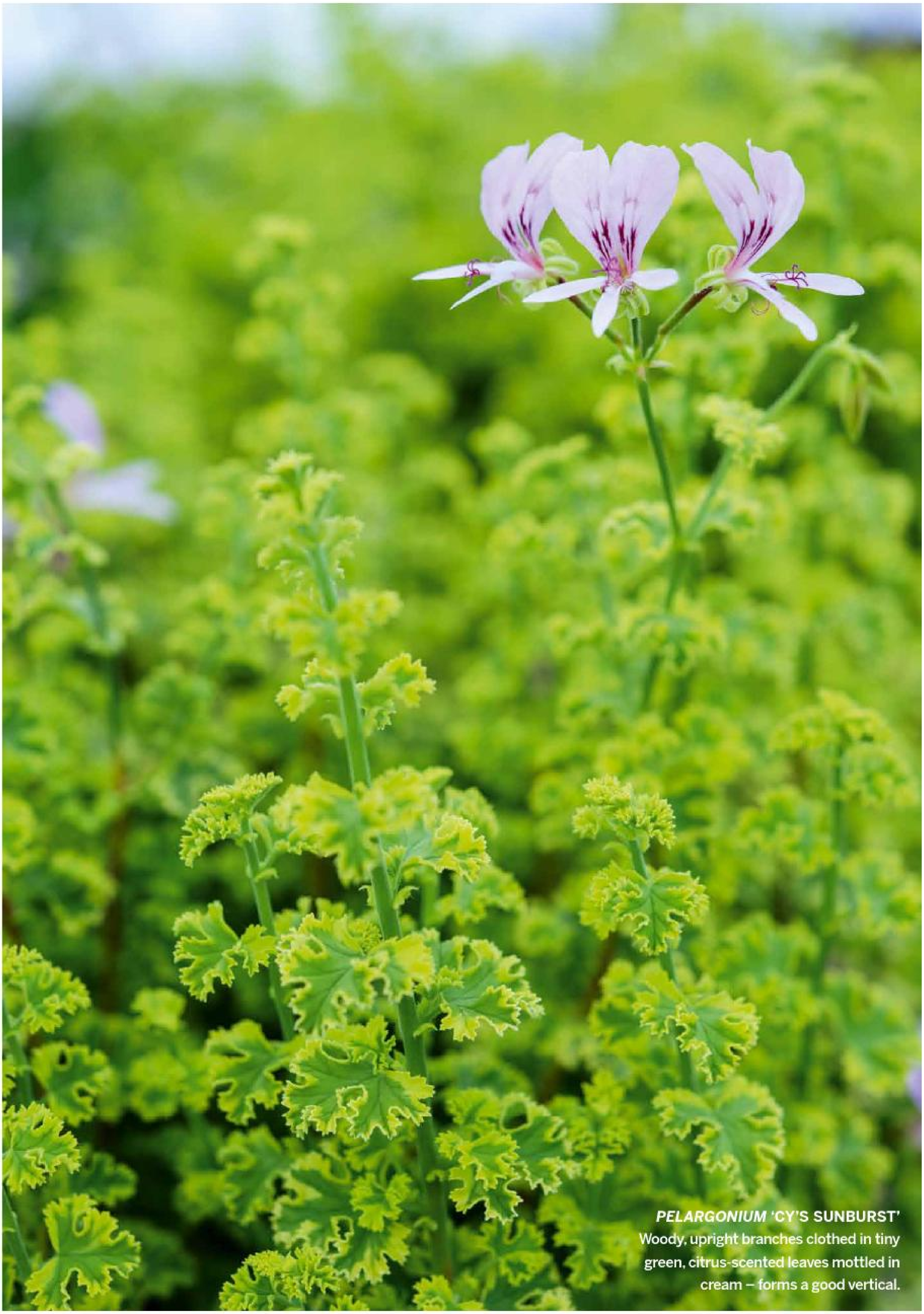
P. **'ROYAL OAK'**
Hints of turpentine on long, lobed leaves darkly zoned in the middle. Good-sized pink flowers blotched in purple make this a handsome pelargonium. One of the hardest to keep, I find. AGM. RHS H1c.



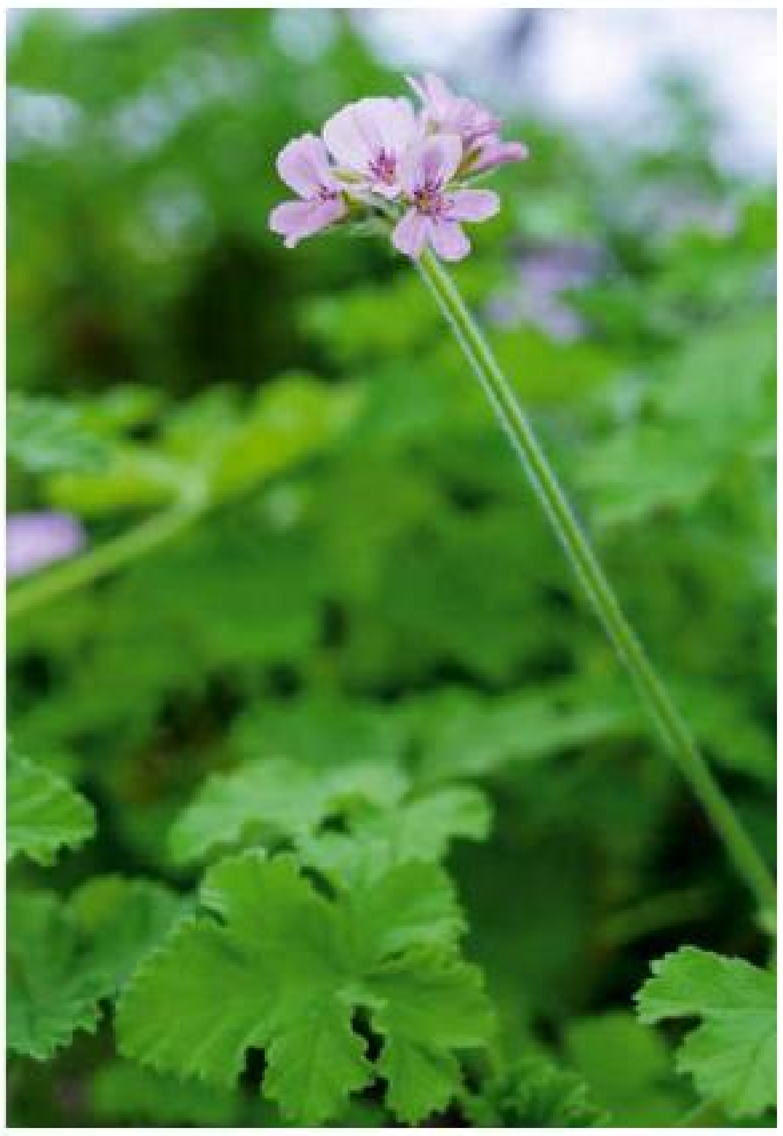
P. **'GREY LADY PLYMOUTH'**
Silver-grey to sage-green leaves lightly edged in white, with a rose-lemon scent and heads of mauve-pink flowers. Soft and feminine and more vigorous than ordinary 'Lady Plymouth' for me. USDA 9b-11.



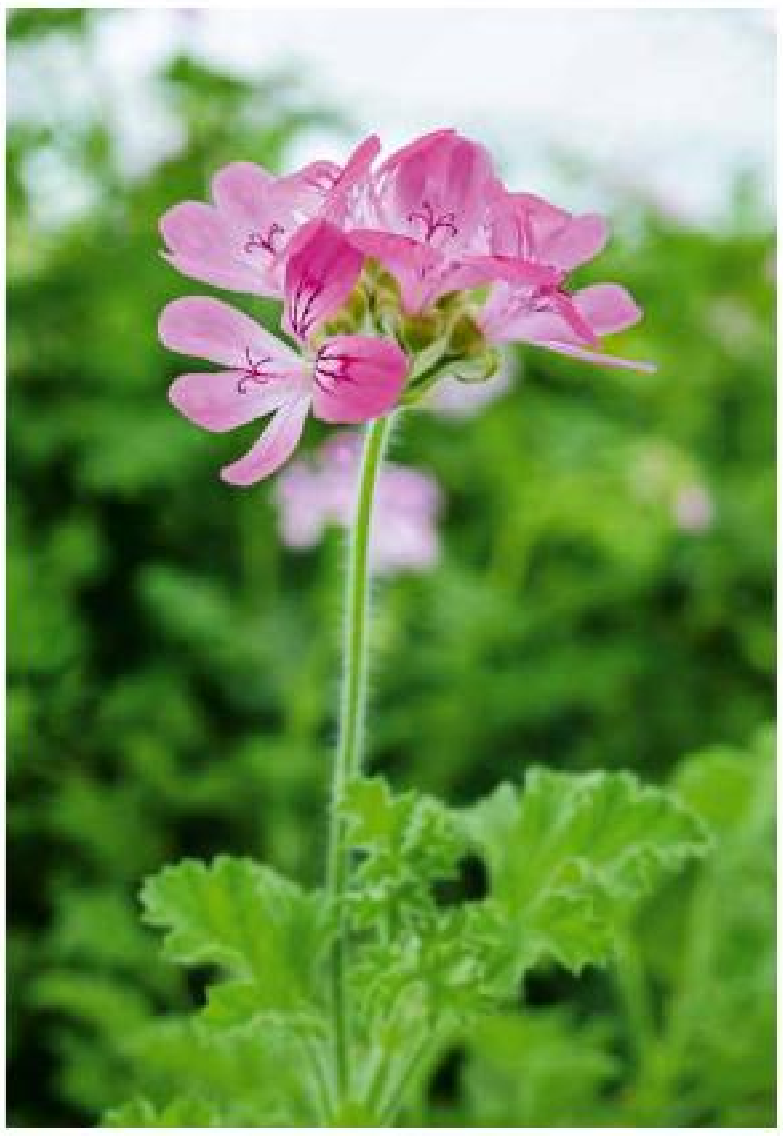
***P.* 'LARA STARSHINE'**
Mid-green, deeply cut foliage, with a spicy, sharp scent and large pink-red flowers. AGM. RHS H1c.



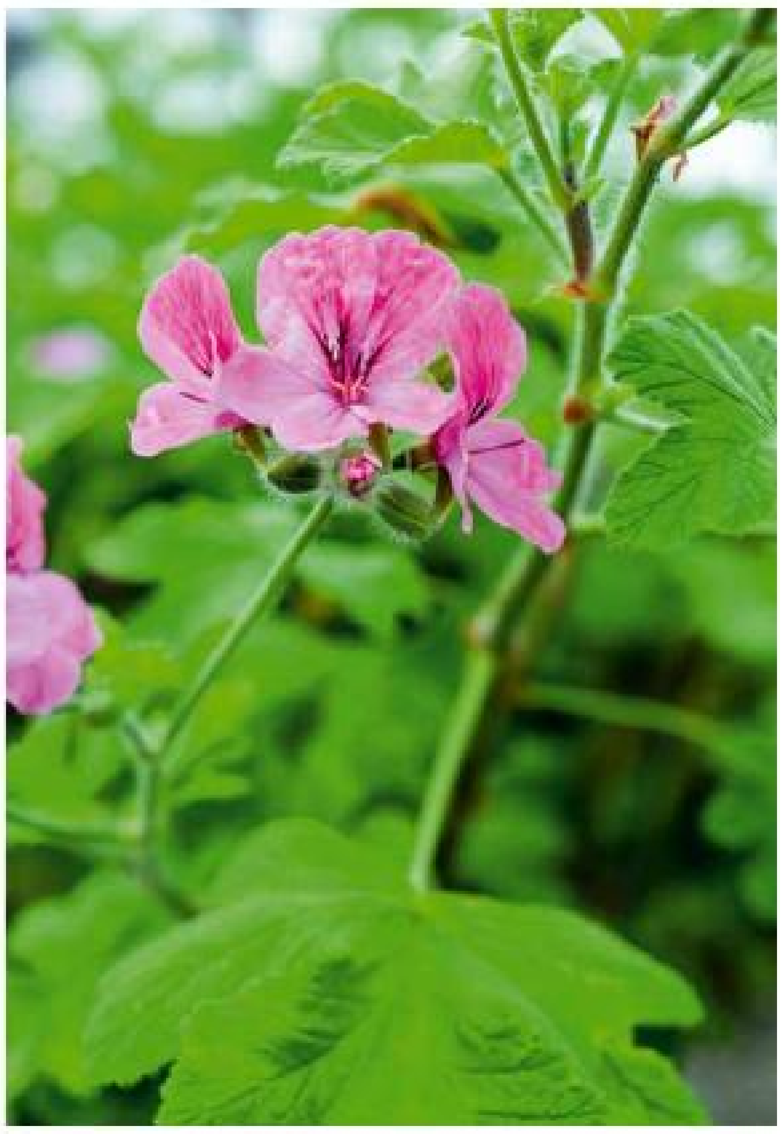
PELARGONIUM 'CY'S SUNBURST'
Woody, upright branches clothed in tiny green, citrus-scented leaves mottled in cream – forms a good vertical.



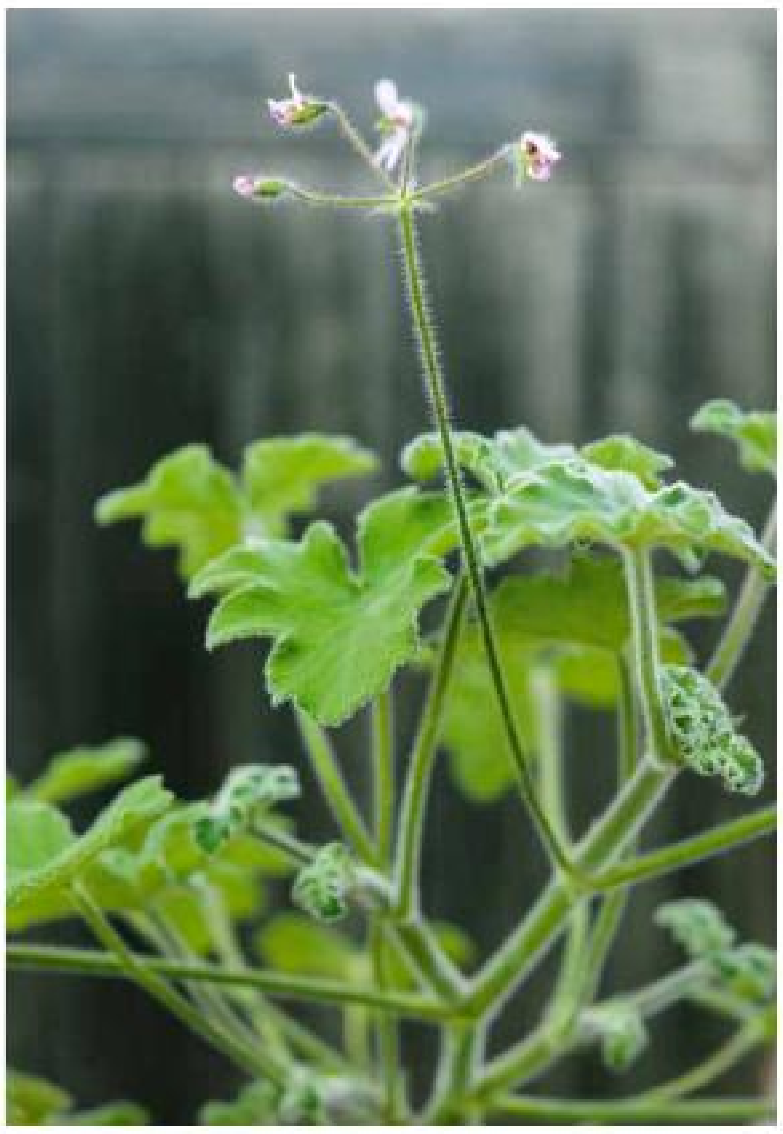
P. 'ATTAR OF ROSES'
Tri-lobed, fuller, mid-green leaf with a rose scent topped by clusters of mauve-pink flowers. Makes a bushy strong plant. AGM. RHS H1c, USDA 9b-11.



P. 'PINK CAPRICORN'
The downy-textured, crisp-edged green leaves combine lemon and rose scents with mauve-pink flowers.



P. 'CLORINDA'
Cedar-scented with large, rounded clear-pink flowers. Much showier flowers than most, with substantial all-green leaves. USDA 9b-11.



P. TOMENTOSUM
The softest, most tactile foliage of all, with furry leaves that are strongly peppermint to camphor. Makes a large plant and bears white flowers. Prefers some shade. AGM. RHS H1c, USDA 9b-11.

How to grow and propagate

- All need regular propagation because pelargoniums tend to become leggy and wiry – another natural defence against grazing animals and the South African climate.
- Cuttings should be taken between June and late August. Trim them below the node and push them into small seed trays of coarse horticultural sand, a couple of centimetres apart with two thirds of the cutting submerged. Cuttings of most cultivars root quickly. Cover the trays with a double layer of thick horticultural fleece in severe weather. Keep the cuttings in the trays over winter, making sure that they are on the dry side. Pot up into 7.5cm round pots containing a 50 per cent mixture of perlite (or vermiculite) and loam-based John Innes 1 in March. Keep new plants on the greenhouse bench, or under cover, until early June. Then plant them out. Feed with Tomorite every two weeks to encourage growth. The high-potash content also hardens the foliage and stems, helping plants to overwinter.
- Specimen plants in single pots need to be kept dry (but not bone dry) and fleeced in cold weather.
- Deadheading the spent flowers in summer looks neater and also encourages more flower buds. These tough pelargoniums can stand a degree or two of frost, but they need to be moved inside by late October before winter descends.
- One of the great advantages of using scented-leaved pelargoniums is their ability to perform in cooler summers. Other tender plants sulk in cool summers, but these still shine.

Good combinations

- Add a deep-purple, scented heliotrope such as 'Chatsworth' to show off the foliage of 'Lady Plymouth' or any variegated pelargoniums. The large, flat 'cherry-pie' heads provide a contrast in early summer. Remove any spent heliotrope flowers as they fade, and water them to encourage more bud. ▷

- Silver *Plectranthus argentatus* does well in the same conditions and the large, felted leaves and blue flower spikes resemble their close relatives, *Solenostemon* or *Coleus*. However these architectural plants are very susceptible to frost and harder to overwinter. Mingle your plectranthus cuttings among your hardier pelargonium cuttings to help protect them in colder weather.
- Lemon verbena (*Aloysia citrodora*), which tends to become tall and wiry with age, is an excellent addition and it adds even more pungency to a container. The bright-green, linear leaves set off the dark-zoned 'Peppermint Chocolate' and 'Royal Oak'. Or you might try a leggy, aromatic menthol-scented plant called *Cedronella canariensis*, also known as Canary balm. This branching herb has clover-shaped heads of pink flowers in summer.
- Trailing blue convolvulus (*C. sabatius*) is an excellent partner too, because it trails below the pelargoniums, and flowers up until late-autumn.
- Some cultivars have larger, more eye-catching flowers: these include the rose-pink 'Clorinda', the coral-red 'Brunswick' and the mauve 'Copthorne'. The latter is a favourite of mine planted en-masse.

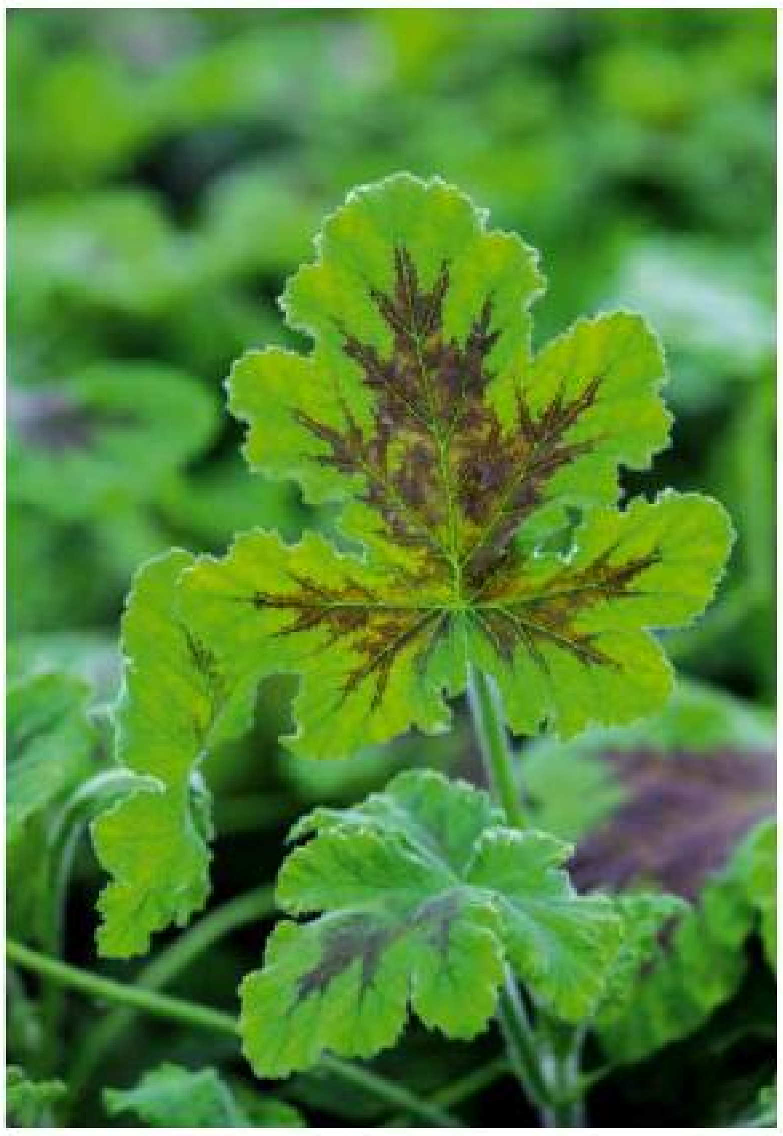
Where to buy and see

Fibrex Nurseries
(Holders of The Plant Heritage National Collection)
Fibrex Nurseries, Honeybourne Road,
Pebworth, Stratford-upon-Avon,
Warwickshire CV37 8XP.
Tel 01789 720788, www.fibrex.co.uk

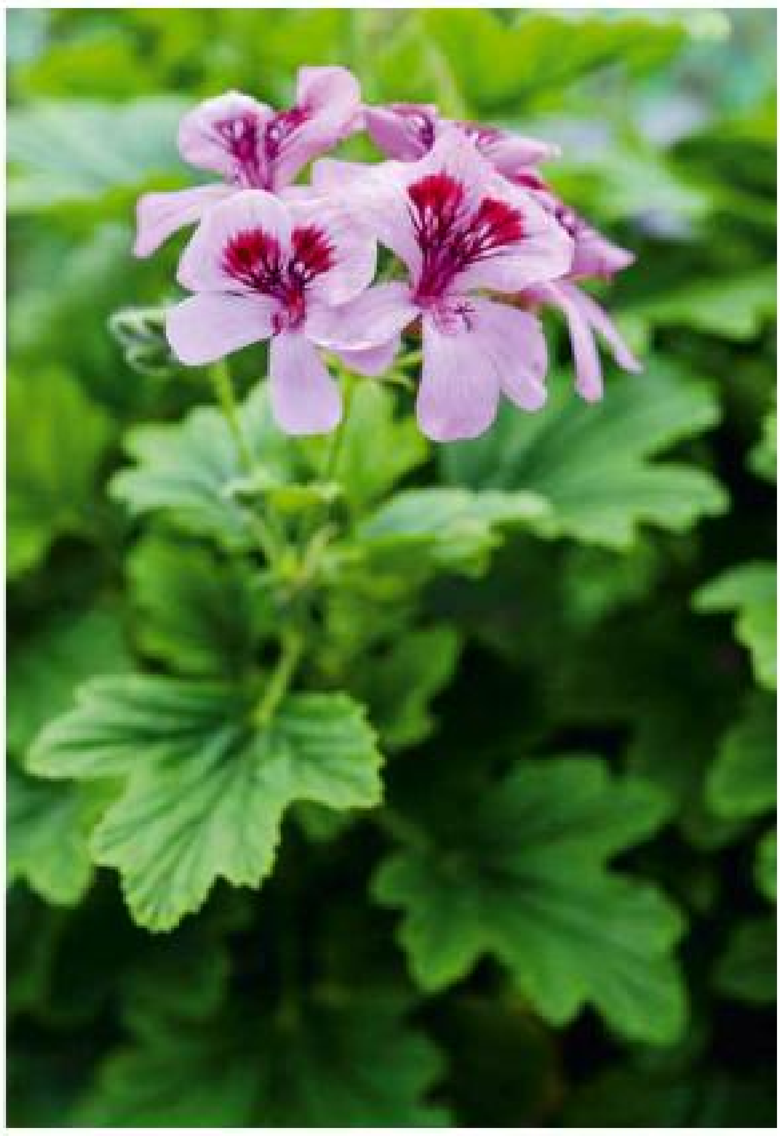
Woottens of Wenhaston
Blackheath, Wenhaston,
Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 9HD.
Tel 01502 478 258,
www.woottensplants.com

Many thanks to Fibrex Nurseries, where the photographs for this feature were taken.

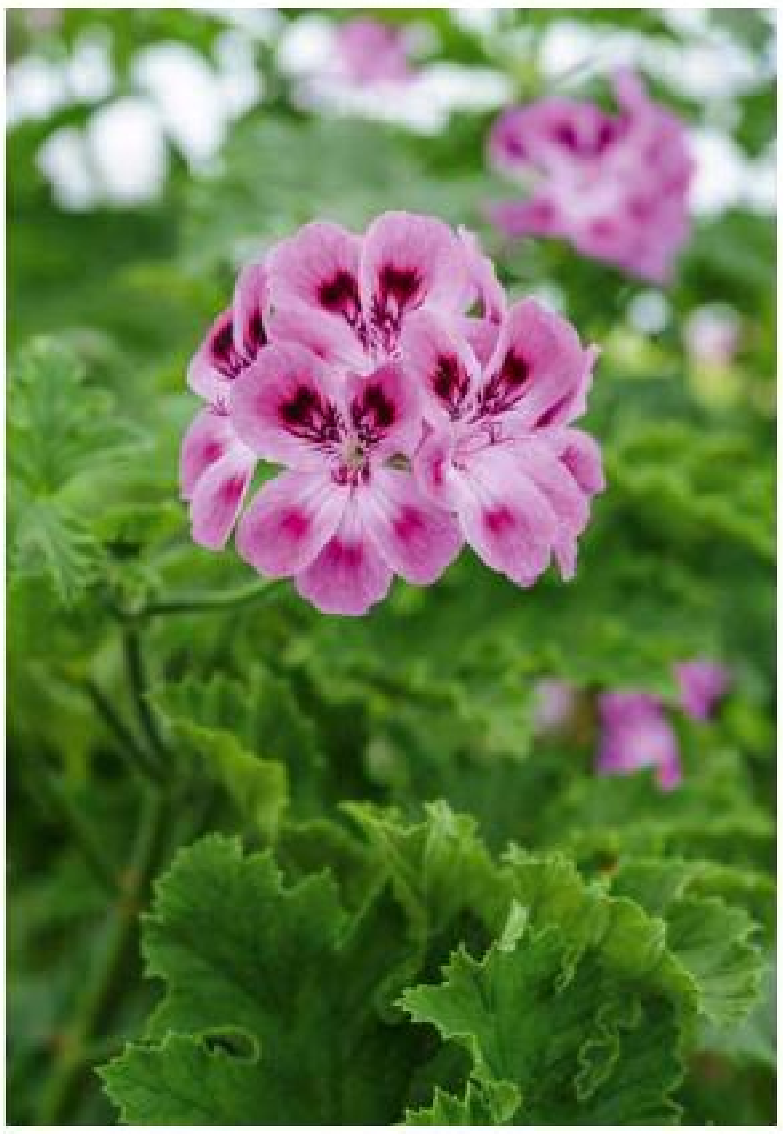
Turn to our reader offer on page 110 for deals on scented pelargoniums.



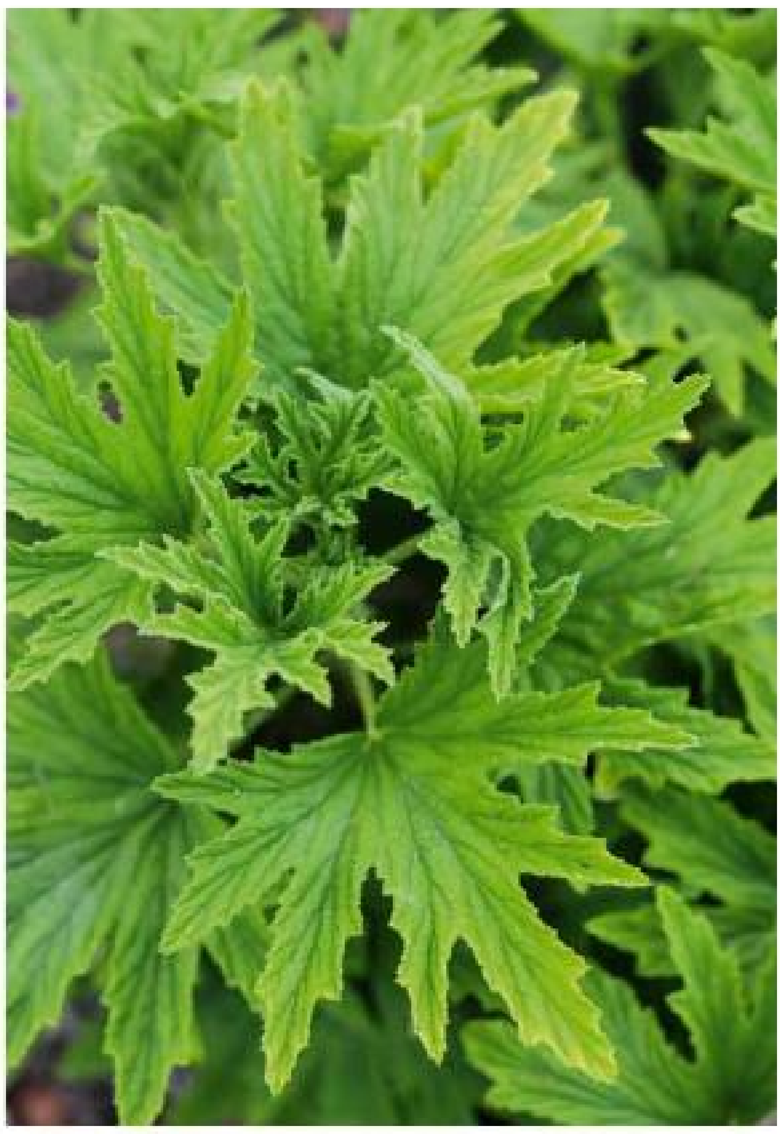
PELARGONIUM **'CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT'**
Softly felted three-inch long lobed leaves with a maroon-chocolate blotch. Peppermint pungency and small pale-mauve flowers. Forms a large plant. USDA 9a-11.



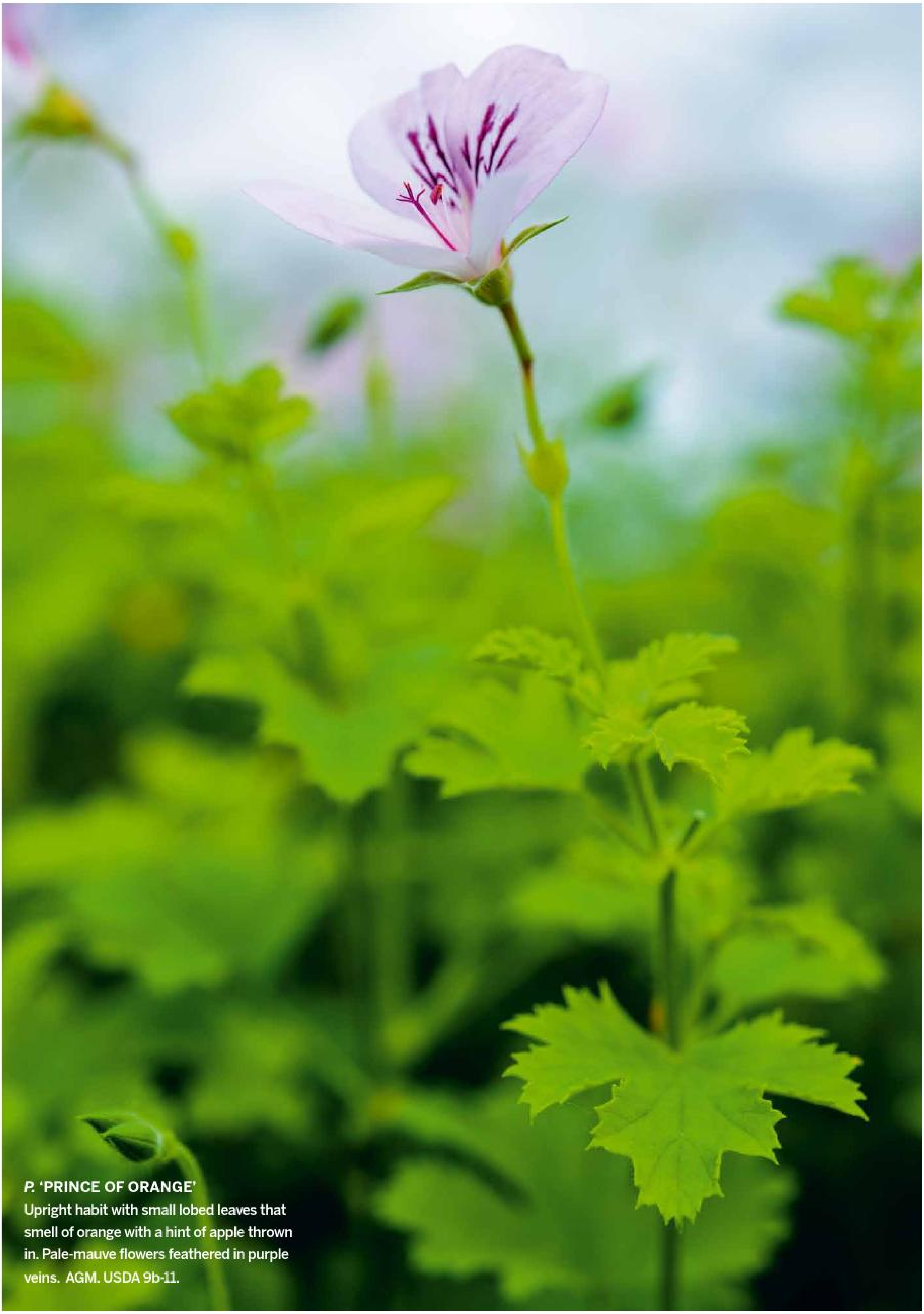
P. **'ORANGE FIZZ'**
Softer, larger green leaves than 'Prince Orange', with a sweet-citrus scent reminiscent of tangerine. Larger mauve-pink flowers heavily marked with purple and pink veins. AGM.



P. **'ORSETT'**
This is a relatively recent hybrid between a regal and a scented-leaved pelargonium so the large, pink flowers persist over summer. The foliage has an interesting smell rather like metal polish. AGM. RHS H1c, USDA 10b-11.



P. **'MABEL GREY'**
Large maple leaves in mid-green held on short stems. Distinctive in appearance and the best lemon scent of all. Large, pale-mauve flowers but not all that often, and often in winter. AGM. RHS H1c, USDA 9b-11.



P. 'PRINCE OF ORANGE'
Upright habit with small lobed leaves that smell of orange with a hint of apple thrown in. Pale-mauve flowers feathered in purple veins. AGM. USDA 9b-11.

Lynden B Miller

New York's pre-eminent public garden designer and parks advocate believes that quality is the driver to a successful public space

WORDS **PAULA DEITZ** PORTRAIT **CHARLIE HOPKINSON**

When, in 1979, Lynden B Miller returned to New York after two years of gardening pursuits in London, she recalls, "I thought the best of my life was over". Already an established collage artist, composing bold abstract landscapes in brilliant Hockney-hued colours, Lynden had read art history at Smith College in Massachusetts, where, she says, "my eye was trained for colour and form".

In New York she completed her Landscape Design Certificate at New York Botanical Garden (NYBG). Soon after, in 1982, she received the call that changed her life, and New York City's as well. By the 1970s, the city's parklands and public spaces had become degraded, even dangerous, including Frederick Law Olmsted's Central Park, considered a masterpiece of landscape design. The tide turned when Elizabeth Barlow Rogers founded the Central Park Conservancy in 1980 to restore the park to its glory days. After attending an exhibition of Lynden's art, she called on her to restore the pastoral park's Conservatory Garden.

Located at the north end of the park abutting East Harlem, the six-acre Conservatory Garden was originally designed in the 1930s. It combines 17th-century-style French parterres of *Santolina* arabesques to the north with English-style herbaceous borders against serpentine hedges to the south, joined by double crab apple tree allées and a central greensward with a wisteria-entwined wrought-iron pergola on a raised terrace. On a radiant April afternoon in 1983, with the crab apples at their rosy-blossomed best, an official planting ceremony was held, thus launching Lynden Miller's 30-year career as New York's pre-eminent public garden designer and parks advocate. Her secret has been to introduce the labour-intensive world of private gardening into the public domain in lieu of the sparse plantings once associated with American parks.

Naysayers predicting the garden's demise were proved wrong by Lynden's theory: "Make it gorgeous, and they will come; keep it that way, and they will help you." From children to wedding parties, the garden is alive from sunrise to sunset. Gregory Long, president of NYBG, credits Lynden with "making gardens fit for kings for ordinary people like us".

Even during planting season, wearing a protective visor and pocketing her beloved red-handled trowel and secateurs, Lynden retains a note of elegance, wearing a gold necklace and earrings. To make rounds with her, one goes from the top to the bottom of the city, from NYBG's Perennial Garden and Ladies Border, Columbia University's campus, Bryant Park, Hudson River Park on a renovated pier, and on to Robert F Wagner Jr Park in Lower Manhattan's Battery Park City.

In downtown Manhattan, after the landscape designers Isabel and Julian Bannerman designed the Queen Elizabeth II September 11th Garden at Hanover Square, in memory of those British citizens who perished in the World Trade Center tragedy, Lynden was brought in to provide her customary flourish. Her palette there includes purple sand cherries, pink anemones, plumbago, variegated hydrangeas, hollies, yews and 67 *Nandina* shrubs representing the number of lost British lives. When Queen Elizabeth visited the garden in July 2010, she particularly complimented Lynden on this gesture.

In 2009, with the publication of her book, *Parks, Plants, and People: Beautifying the Urban Landscape*, Lynden stepped out of New York and became an instant national treasure, invited to spread her gospel of "how high-quality, imaginative, year-round plantings can soften and civilise city life."

Lynden is particularly proud of completing the 97th Street Pocket Park on Park Avenue, two blocks from her Fifth Avenue apartment. After Park Avenue's railroad tracks were buried in a tunnel, it became a fashionable boulevard with a median strip planted in cherry trees, except, that is, for the neglected final segment beyond 96th Street. Lynden got the Parks Department to create a mini-town square with sturdy seating and her selections of hardy trees, shrubs and plants. Children flock to the far end to watch trains enter the tunnel, and the drivers look up, wave and sound their horns. During this interview there, Lynden's pleasure with the children and the success of her newest park – among her 30 civic projects – was palpable, a success that confirms her belief that public parks provide a "powerful connection between people and nature". □

USEFUL INFORMATION

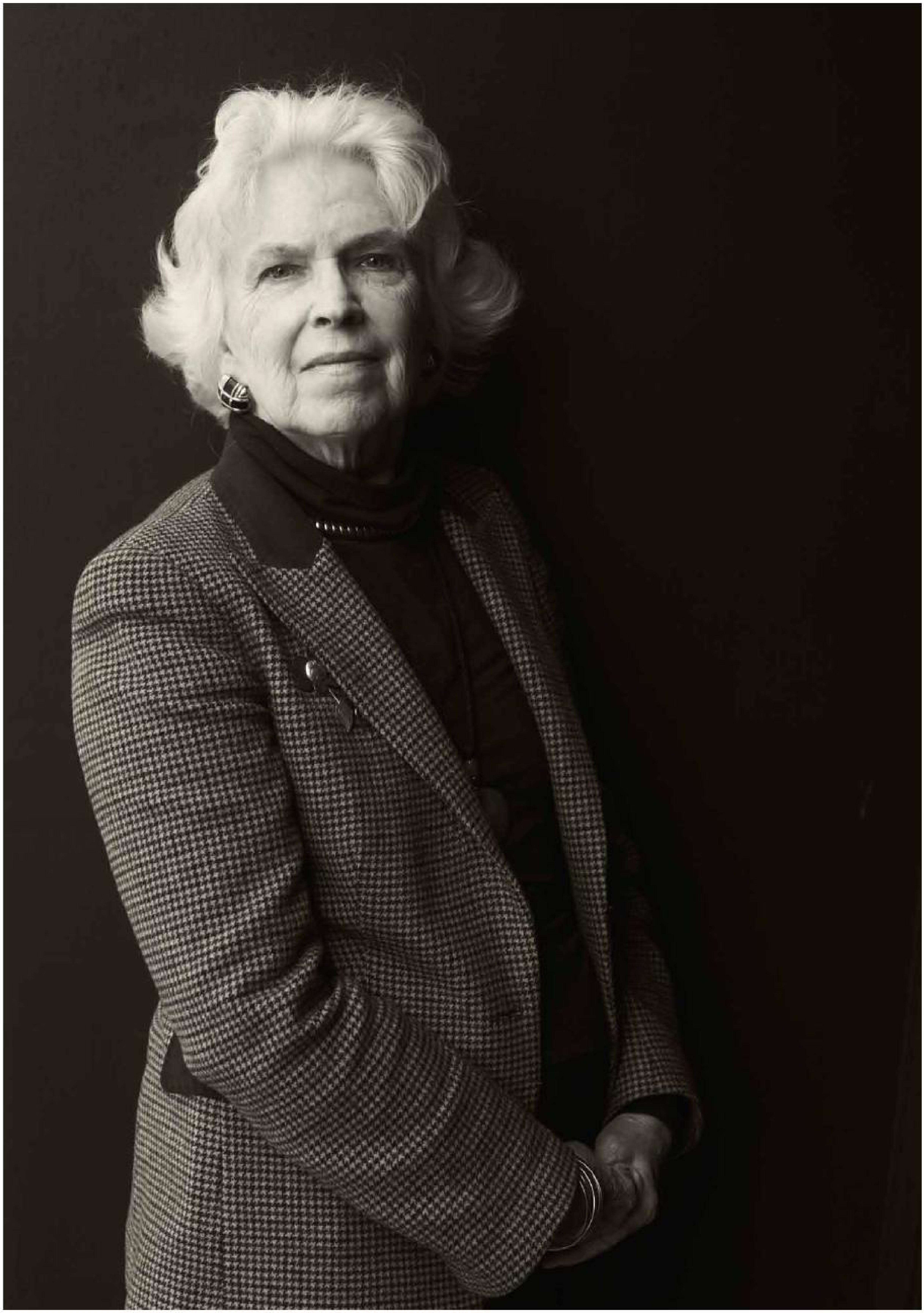
Parks, Plants and People: Beautifying the Urban Landscape by Lynden B Miller. WW Norton & Co, £35.

www.publicgardendesign.com

NEXT MONTH

Sylvie and Patrick Quibel of Le Jardin Plume.

> *"Make it gorgeous, and they will come; keep it that way, and they will help you"*



Dutch courage

Bastin Nursery brings a touch of the Mediterranean to a small corner of the Netherlands

WORDS **SIMONE VAN HEININGEN** PHOTOGRAPHS **ELKE BORKOWSKI**

Roger and Linda Bastin like their plants to be both beautiful and useful; for example *Echinacea purpurea*, in this case 'Prairie Splendor', is believed to stimulate the immune system.

Right The rural scene with livestock grazing on the hill above swathes of lavender is reminiscent of southern France.

In brief

NAME Bastin Nursery.
WHAT Nursery specialising in Mediterranean plants.
WHERE Aalbeek, a tiny hamlet in the southernmost tip of the Netherlands.
SIZE Five acres.
CLIMATE Temperate continental climate, fairly mild but winters have a 1°C average.
SOIL Loamy, well drained and rich.
POINTS OF INTEREST Organic growing methods and principles. Strong sense of 'community spirit'.

By Dutch standards, the province of Limburg is hilly. And Roger and Linda Bastin of Bastin Nursery in Aalbeek, at 100 metres above sea level, are considered high-altitude gardeners.

Their renowned collection of Mediterranean plants – including well over a hundred different lavenders – feels very much at home here on a terraced plot that covers approximately five acres. Although on a north-west facing slope, the three-metre-thick layer of local loamy soil provides good drainage and excellent growing conditions, as demonstrated by the lush display beds. Roger says: “When we bought this place 13 years ago, it took some doing to get it right. For years, this had been rough pasture. Terracing the site meant that each drop would expose the subsoil, so we had to add tons of compost.” Looking down from the flat top of the hill, where the nursery’s stock makes the most of the August sunshine, the scene is set like a slice of southern France. An old pear tree (*Pyrus communis* ‘Légipont’), a couple of local Mergelland sheep, free range chickens and beehives – “The animals are Linda’s domain” – occupy the higher end of the hill. Between two natural-looking areas, which were in fact planted by Roger, a gravel path leads down along the four terraces towards the 300-year-old farm buildings that Roger, Linda and their children call home. Provençal-blue window frames, a sunbathing orange tabby cat and a drowsy Bouvier dog add to the Mediterranean feel. To the left of the main building, which also houses the office – the throbbing heart of their highly successful web shop – a narrow dyke is planted with lavender and a prairie border separates the plot from the road. A raised bed is walled by local marlstone and covered in thyme, from the woolly *Thymus polytrichus* subsp. *britannicus* to easy-care *Thymus pulegioides* ‘Foxley’ and caraway thyme, *Thymus herba-barona*. Herbs are close to Roger’s heart. In fact, before they moved here from nearby Brunssum, the Bastin Nursery specialised in herbs. “But I found myself looking for excuses to call any plant a herb,” Roger says.

The Bastins’ wish to expand the nursery, both in size and selection, led to the move to Aalbeek. Their philosophies have not changed, though. Roger and Linda both hold a degree in organic farming and apply the organic growing methods and principles in their nursery. Both are vegetarians and have a passion for edible plants. “My motto used to be that I did not like plants that had the audacity of merely being beautiful. Over time, I have mellowed. I am learning to appreciate a plant for its beauty alone,” says Roger. But old habits die hard, and a lot of the plants sold by Bastin Nursery combine beauty with fragrant, medicinal and gourmet qualities, ▷

Top left *Echinacea purpurea* ‘Prairie Splendor’ and ‘Twilight’ mingle with *Stipa tenuissima* and *Achillea* ‘Feuerland’.

Top right One of the 300-year-old farm buildings houses the nursery shop.

Bottom left The narrow dyke is planted with, among others, *Lavandula angustifolia* ‘Nikita’, ‘Contrast’ and ‘Peter Pan’.

Bottom right Herbs *Origanum* ‘Kent Beauty’ and *Thymus* Coccineus Group ‘Purple Beauty’ provide ground cover.

Bel

Browsing the Bastin Nursery's terraces is pure olfactory joy.

SABRINA ROTHE / MICHAEL BRECKWOLDT

▷ described extensively and with humour on the information cards.

Each terrace is separated from the next by a beautiful border, and the plants used in each border are in the crates on that particular terrace. Perfect for the gardener who has difficulty coming up with interesting combinations. The Spring Border, for instance, translates into crates filled with, among many others, pulmonaria – Roger's favourite groundcover plant, hellebores such as *Helleborus* x *ericsmithii* 'Bob's Best' and wonderful tree peonies such as *Paeonia* Gansu Group 'Bing Shan Xue Lian'. Along the large polytunnel, a border of two metres deep by 20 metres long symbolises what has become known as 'the Dutch wave', a planting scheme that mixes gently swaying grasses with flowering perennials. *Lavandula angustifolia* cultivars such as Miss Muffet (= 'Scholmis') and Melissa Lilac (= 'Dow4') happily share soil space with *Eryngium* x *zabelii* 'Jos Eijking' and *Stipa barbata*. "For years, I thought a combination of plants native to the same region worked best," says Roger. "Somehow, an Asian plant simply looked out of place in among the Mediterranean plants. But it is growing on me. An exotic acanthus can look beautiful against the lavenders." ☐

USEFUL INFORMATION

Kwekerij Bastin, Nieuwenhuysstraat 29,
6336 XV Aalbeek, Limburg, The Netherlands.
Tel +31 (0)45 5231475
Website www.bastin.nl
Open Wednesday to Saturday, 10am-5pm.

9 of Roger's favourite lavenders

1 *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Contrast'
Our own selection, with very pale violet, almost white flowers emerging from the deepest dark violet, almost black calyx.

2 *L. a.* Blue Ice (= 'Dow3')
The palest violet there is. Any paler and it would be white. Looks great when set off against darker colours. USDA 6b-11†.

3 *L. a.* 'Blue Mountain White'
The best white I've ever seen. Well-shaped, compact, but no dwarf. USDA 6b-11.

4 *L. a.* 'Elizabeth'
Longest bloomer, as classically lavender-coloured as can be. Archetypal lavender at its best.

5 *L. a.* Melissa Lilac (= 'Dow4')
Fluffy flowers in a very special lilac. This plant is remarkable and in a colour category of its own. USDA 6b-11.

6 *L. a.* 'Miss Katherine'
The best pink flowers. Period. AGM*. RHS H4, USDA 6b-11.

7 *L. a.* 'Peter Pan'
The best dwarf cultivar – compact with dark flowers. USDA 6b-11.

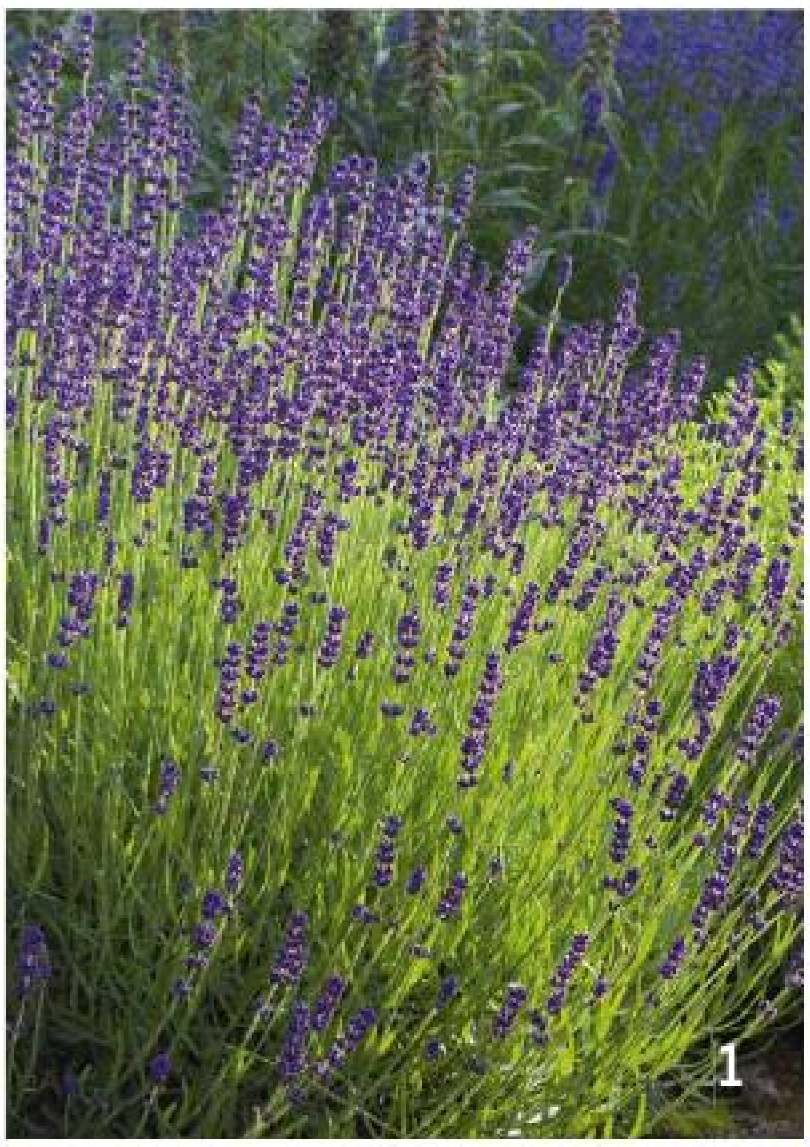
8 *L. a.* 'Royal Blue'
A new and very promising dark cultivar that keeps flowering.

9 *L. a.* 'Siesta'
A very full growing, vigorous and healthy plant with dark flowers. USDA 6a-10b.

Lavender tips from Roger Bastin

- **Pruning is essential**. At the nursery, we regularly pinch out the new growth on cuttings and young plants to stimulate lateral branching. Keep this up when you've just planted young lavenders.
- **Prune in spring to stimulate growth** and prune in autumn to retain shape. Make sure you've finished pruning by the beginning of October, preferably earlier. Once the flowering season is over, there is no need to wait. One big advantage is the plant will continue to grow and you'll spend your winter looking at beautiful silvery grey balls rather than bare branches. Be a bit more careful with *Lavandula* x *intermedia*, though, as it is much less hardy.
- **There is hardly ever a need to fertilise** lavender. And don't water them, unless they are in pots.
- **Lavenders can be planted year-round**, unless it's freezing. The best time is October. Before planting, work lots of lime into the soil, about four times as much as the packaging says. Every two to three years add a maintenance dose, as prescribed. Note, however, that *Lavandula stoechas* cultivars and hybrids don't want lime and are best pruned in summer.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.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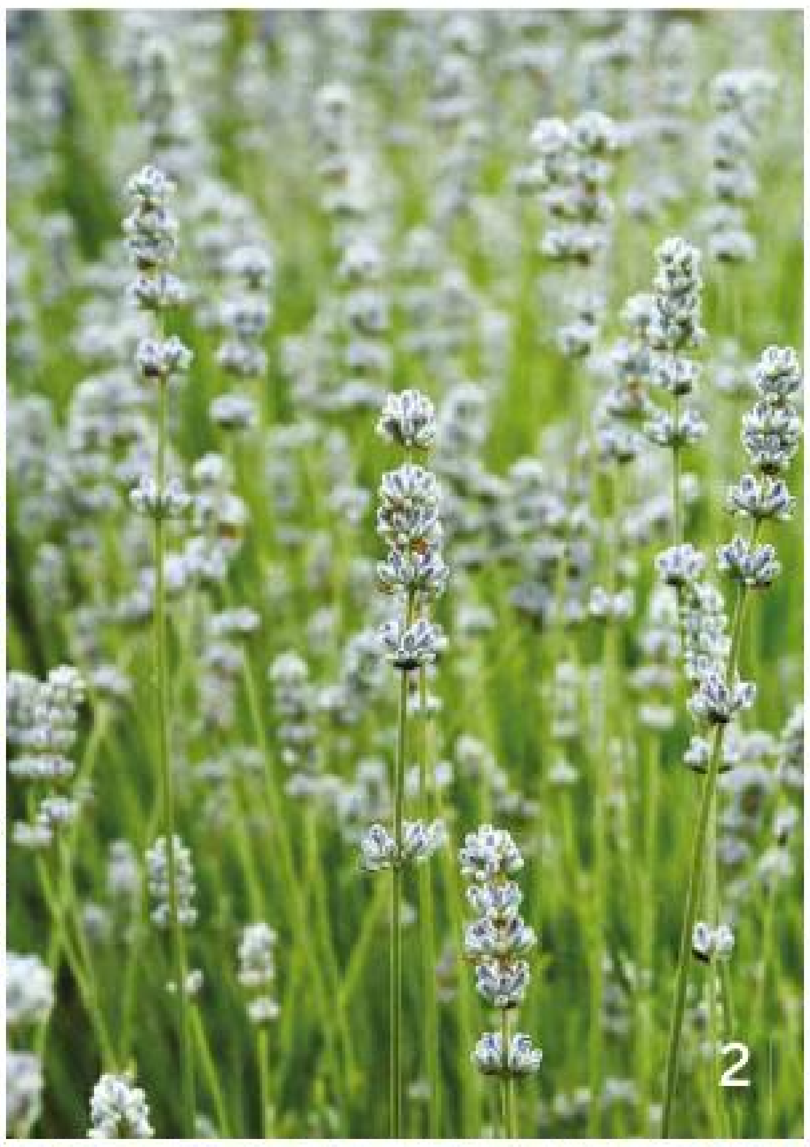
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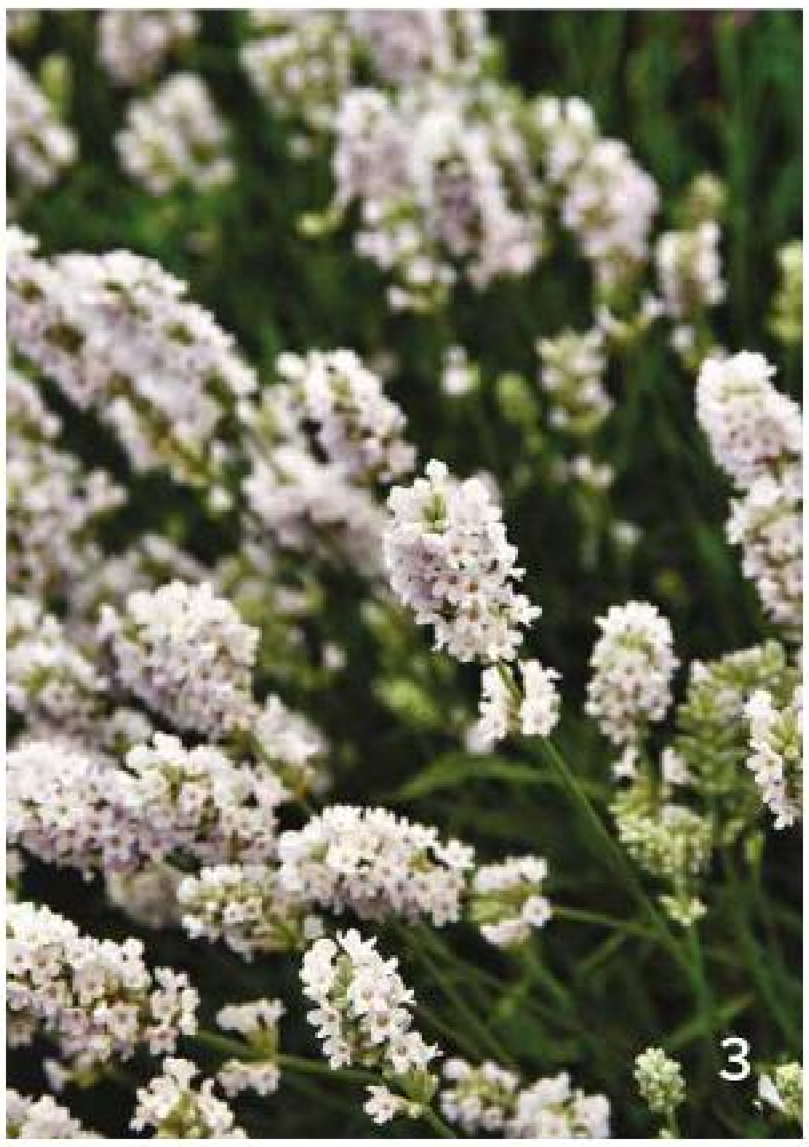
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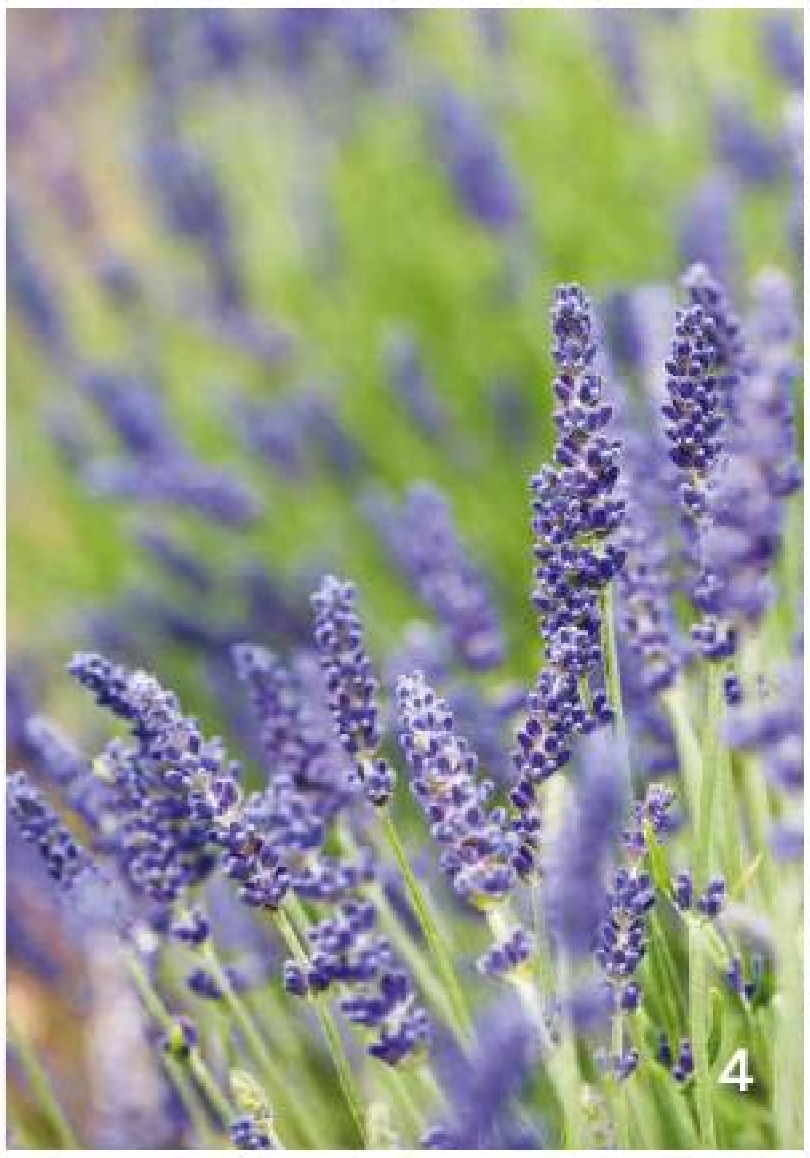
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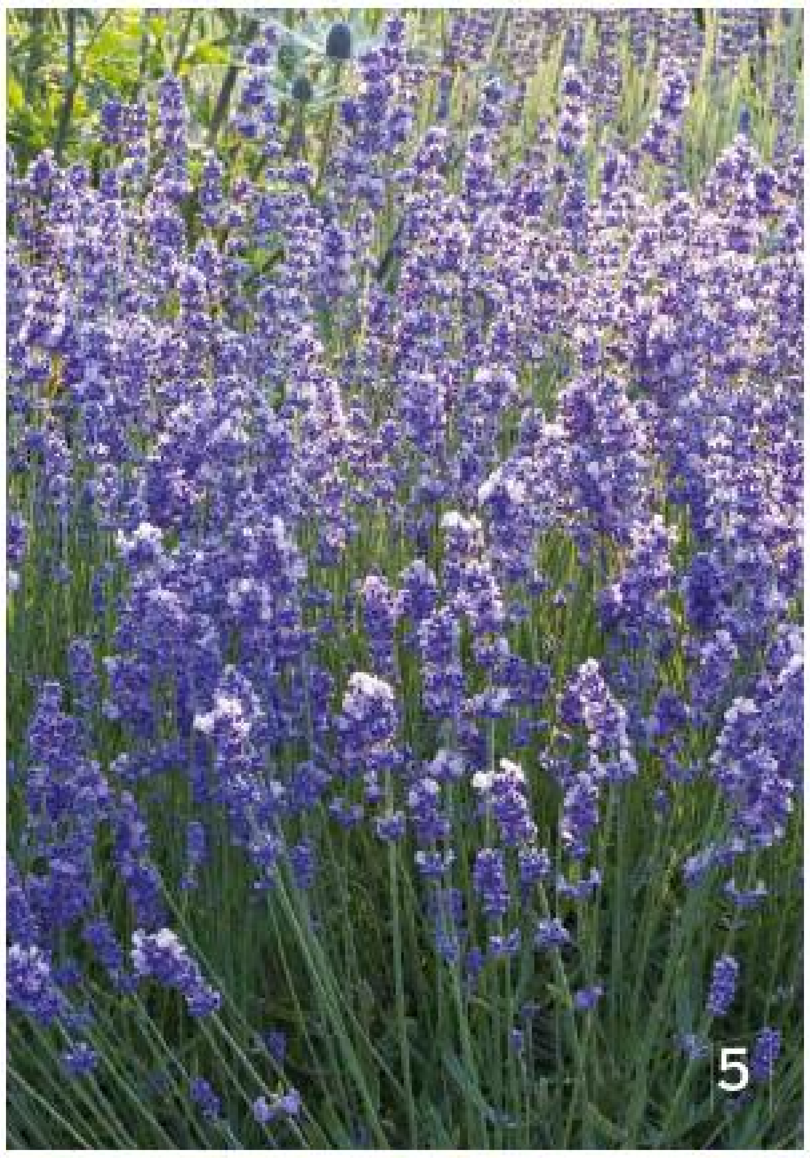
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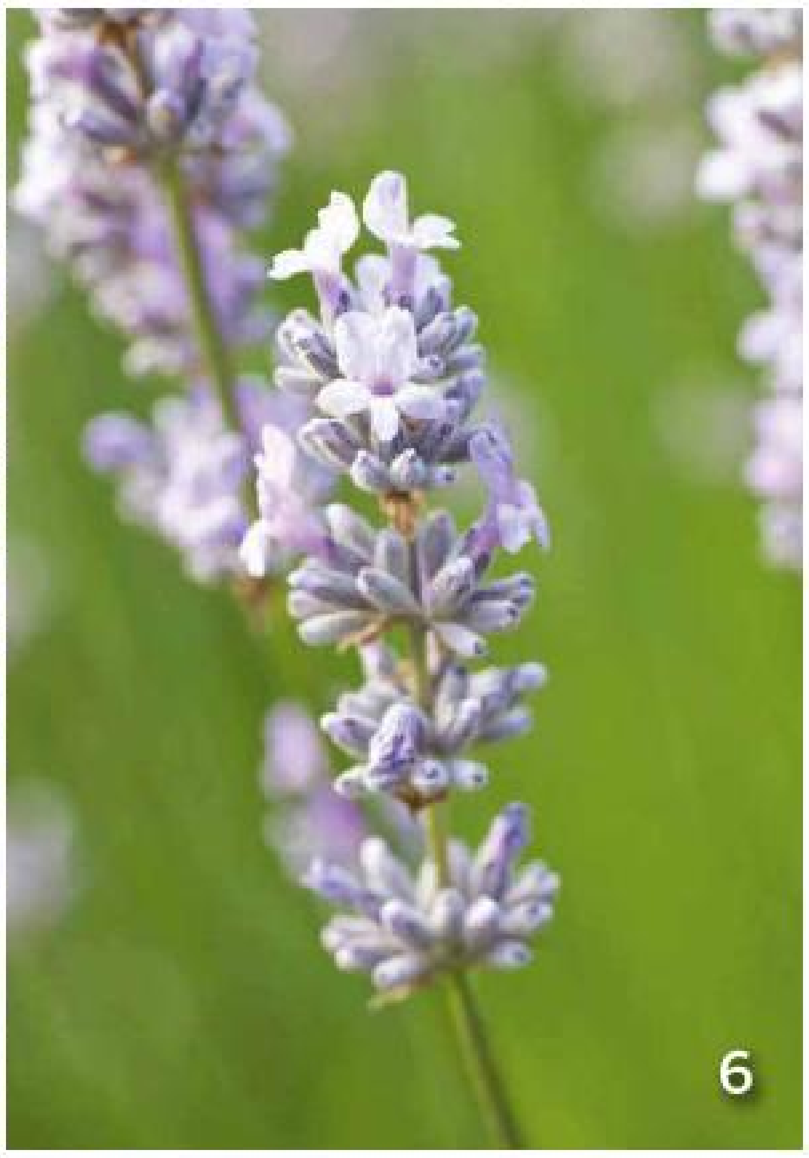
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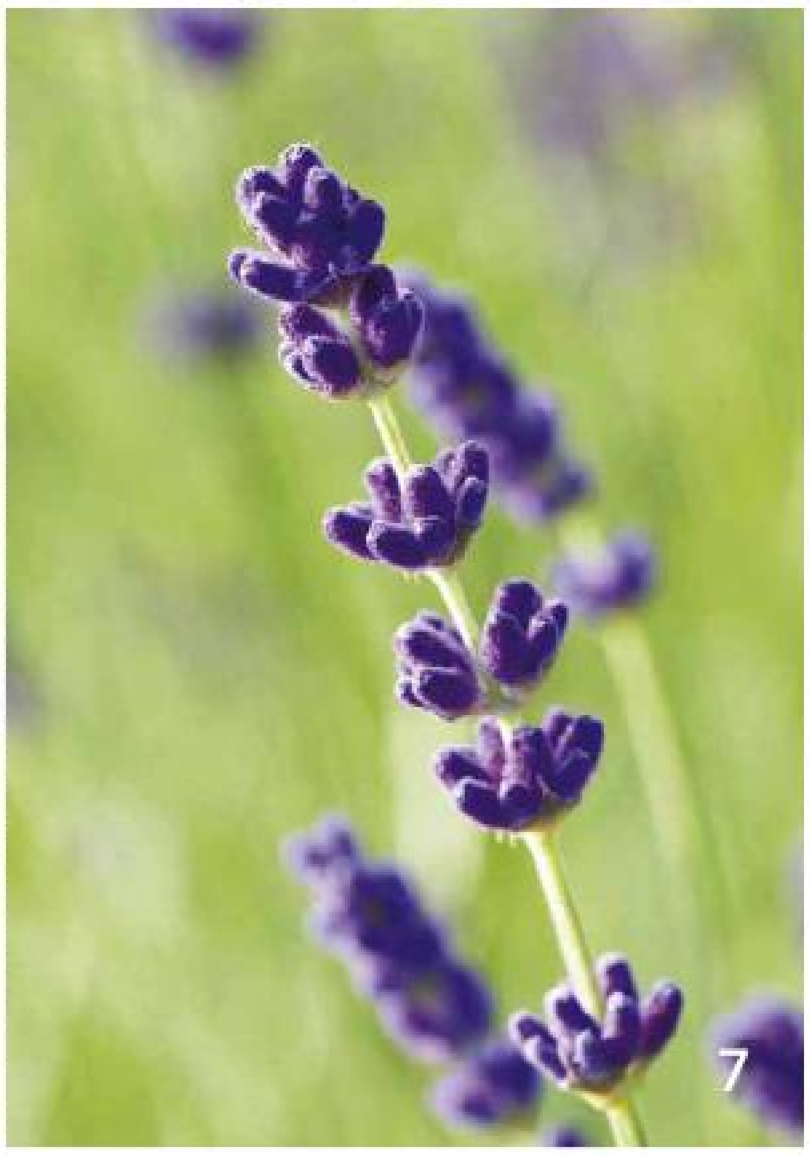
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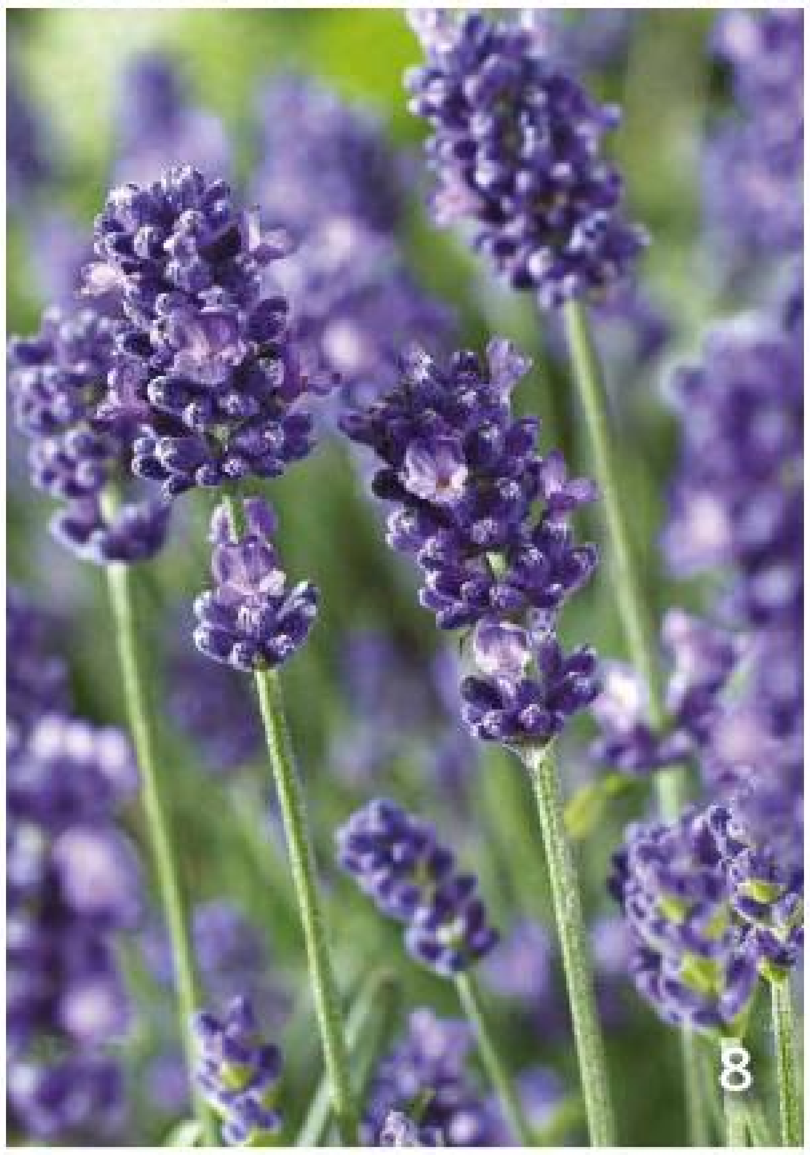
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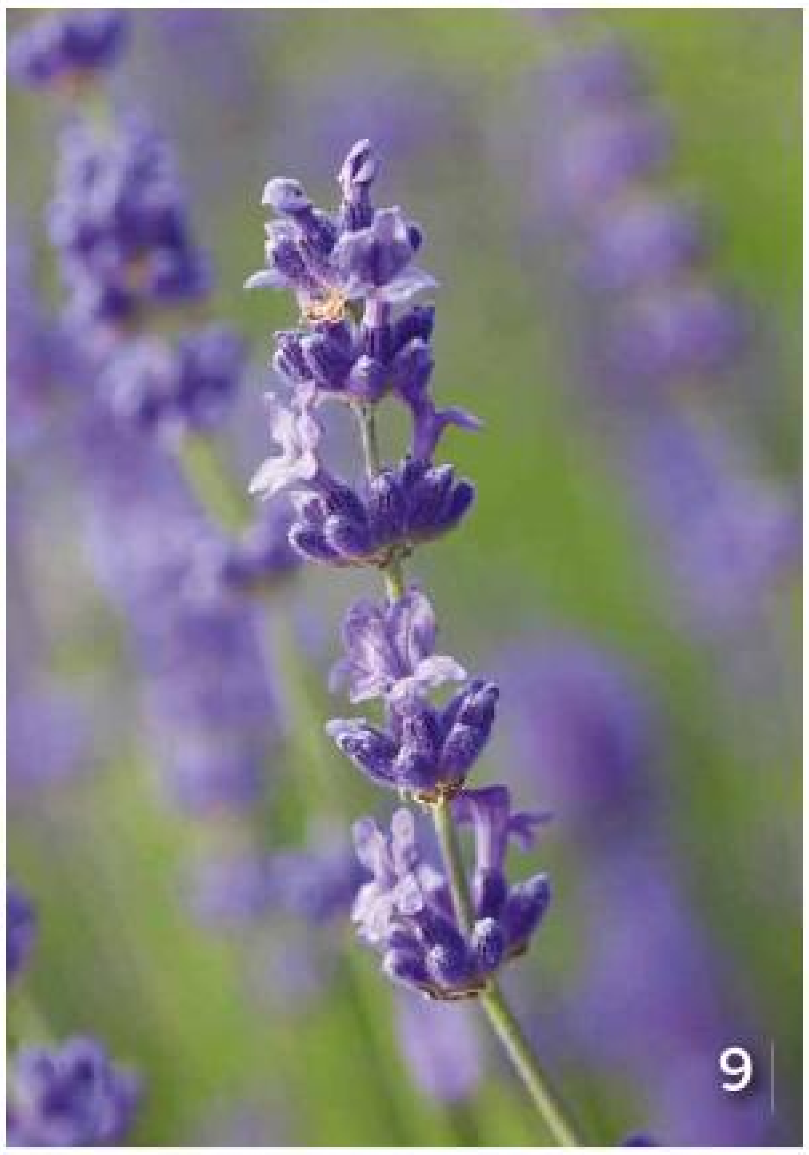
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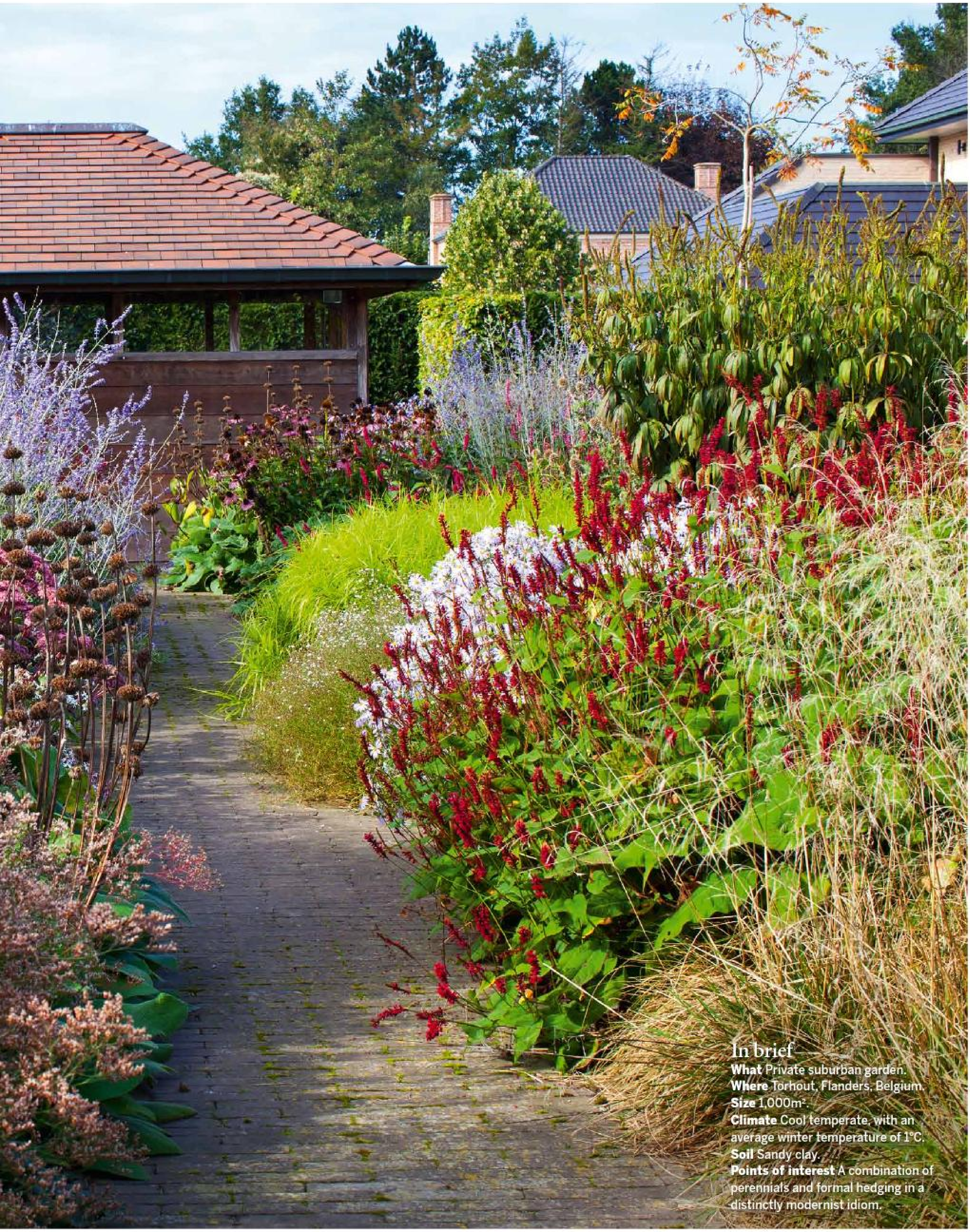
2 PLANTOGRAPHY / ALAMY. 3 MARTIN HUGHES-JONES / ALAMY. 4 ANNE GILBERT / ALAMY. 8 VISIONS PICTURES & PHOTOGRAPHY

New horizons

Designer Chris Ghyselen is leading the way in Belgium with his radical use of two elements – perennials, and the nation's favourite, the garden hedge

WORDS **NOËL KINGSBURY** PHOTOGRAPHS **MARIANNE MAJERUS**

Tucked behind beech and yew hedging, the double border features perennials and grasses with late-season interest.



In brief

What Private suburban garden.
Where Torhout, Flanders, Belgium.
Size 1,000m^2.
Climate Cool temperate, with an average winter temperature of 1°C.
Soil Sandy clay.
Points of interest A combination of perennials and formal hedging in a distinctly modernist idiom.

Driving around Flanders, the overall impression of people's gardens is that they are simple, almost austere. There are plenty of trees and flowering shrubs and plenty of beautifully clipped hedges, but few perennials. Dutch-speaking, this northern province of Belgium has a different recent history and culture to Holland, where many front gardens are a mass of flowering perennials and other plants. Thanks to designer Chris Ghyselen, this might be changing.

Arriving at the home of Dirk and Marie Rose de Vriese in the suburbs of the city of Torhout, the first sight is indeed of minimalist austerity. The gently sloping front garden is completely taken up with a matt of *Stephanandra incisa*, a low-growing shrub that needs only clipping at the edges to maintain it. Entering the rear garden from around the side of the house, the planting is more simple – *Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Gelbstiel' and some shrub roses: *Rosa* 'Nevada' (white), 'Geranium' (scarlet) 'Kathleen' (pale pink) – all single blooms.

The lawn that the house and its terrace surveys is wide (three quarters of the width of the garden) but shallow, with a beech hedge at the rear. From the house it is just possible to see some perennials poking up above the beech, and further investigation reveals an elevated double border. Here, austerity is abandoned and a wide range of perennials gives colour and scent all summer long. I am sure that no British designer would dream of hiding away their border like this, but for Chris Ghyselen it is all part of the plan. "I like there to be no exhibitionism in the garden," he says. "I want to make people curious. The garden should not show itself all at once but seduce them and make them want to go and look."

Dirk de Vriese commissioned Chris after hearing about him from his wife's sister. He enjoys the maintenance, all of which he does himself. In addition he grows vegetables at his son's house nearby. Needless to say, hedge clipping is a major task. The perennials used are all varieties noted for their reliability and longevity and only need cutting back in the autumn.

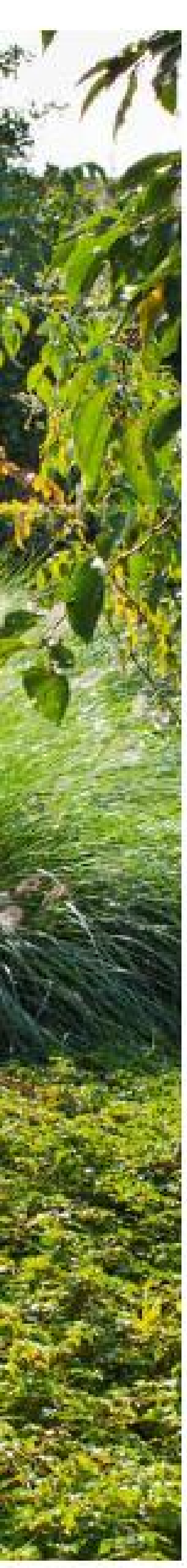
Chris has established a reputation as the leading Flemish garden designer partly through his use of perennials, but also for his modernist interpretation of the region's main garden passion – hedges. "I have always been interested in perennials," he says, "but the Flemish tradition is very much hedges and shrubs, although interest in perennials has been growing over the last five years, and when I was younger I was very influenced by landscape and garden architect Mien Ruys." Chris grows perennials commercially on a small scale himself, has done some plant collecting in Nepal, and is producing a ▷

Top left The austerity of a neighbouring wall and the hedge is softened by perennials.

Top right A formal pool echoes the geometry of the rest of the garden.

Bottom left An edging of the grass *Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Gelbstiel'.

Bottom right *Ceratostigma willmottianum*, here in the foreground, is a good late summer blue.



> *"The garden should not show itself all at once but seduce them and make them want to go and look"*

▷ steady stream of good new cultivars, including *Persicaria amplexicaulis*. There are four selections of this plant in the garden here: 'Fine Pink' and 'Red Baron'. *Persicaria amplexicaulis* is somehow the perfect plant for a garden culture which is just creeping cautiously out from behind the hedge and looking at perennials.

The double border of perennials makes for a colourful splash, but its exuberance is contained by hedges, some yew, some beech. "We like hedges for structure and privacy," explains Chris, "but I like the contrast between perennials and hedges." It is perhaps this that is the core of his success as a designer here. He suggests I explore behind the hedge at the rear of the double border. Here I discover a two-metre wide strip of grass between the hedge and the garden's outer yew hedge, partly overshadowed by some small flowering cherry and crab apple trees, each with a light at its base. "It's a secret world behind the big perennials," Chris tells me. "I like to do this in small gardens." Chris's own garden shows this love of secret passages and unexpected corners. It is as if the narrow alleys and surprise routes through the nearby medieval city of Bruges have seeped into his planning and re-emerged in a green and contemporary form.

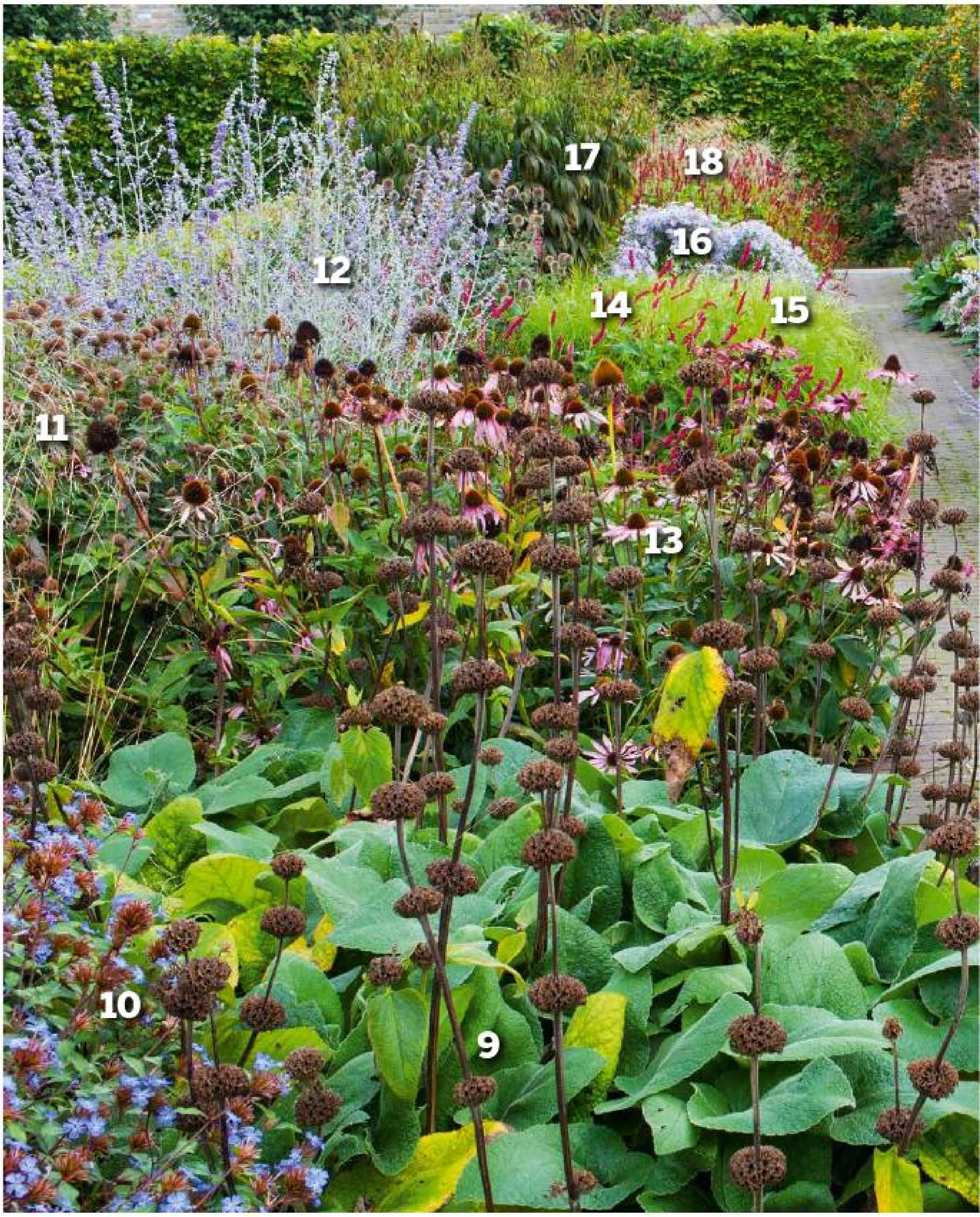
All the elements we know from gardens at home, or indeed from gardens in the Netherlands, are here, but arranged differently, pared down and with a discipline we rarely see. It is exciting to observe a country taking up perennial planting, and it will be fascinating to see how it develops. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

You can see more of Chris's work online.

Tel +32 (050) 78 14 90

Website www.chrisghyselen.be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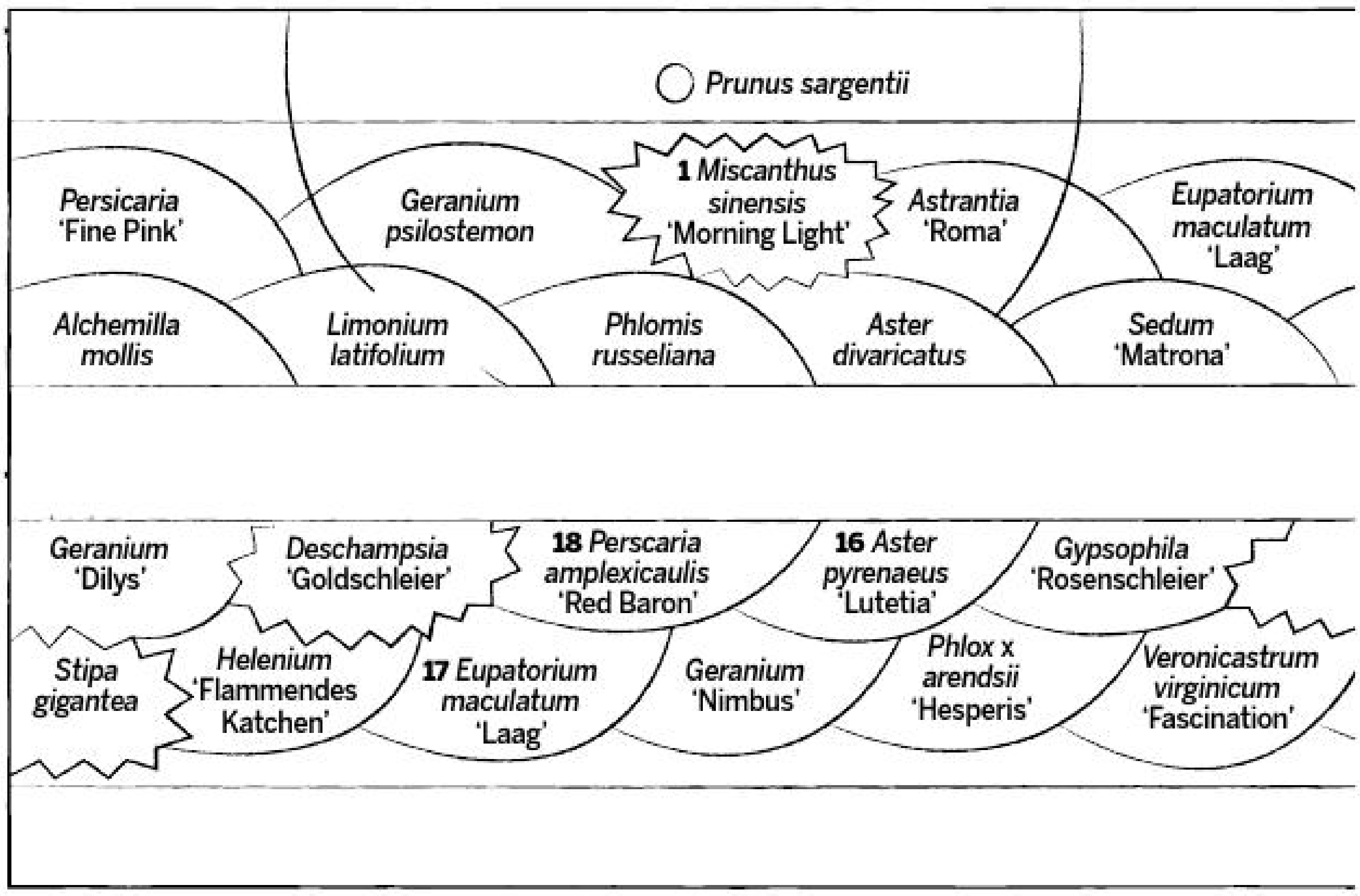
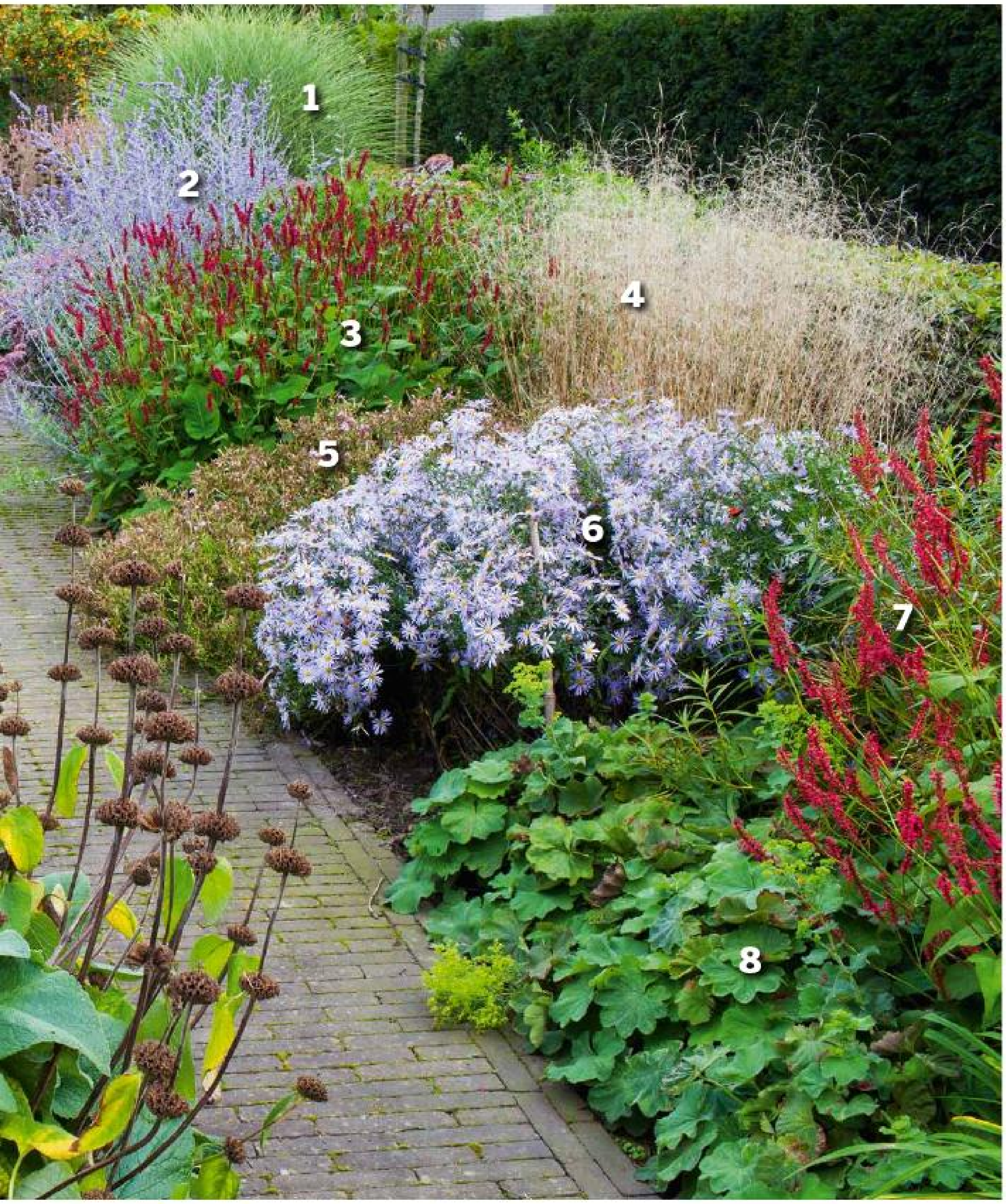
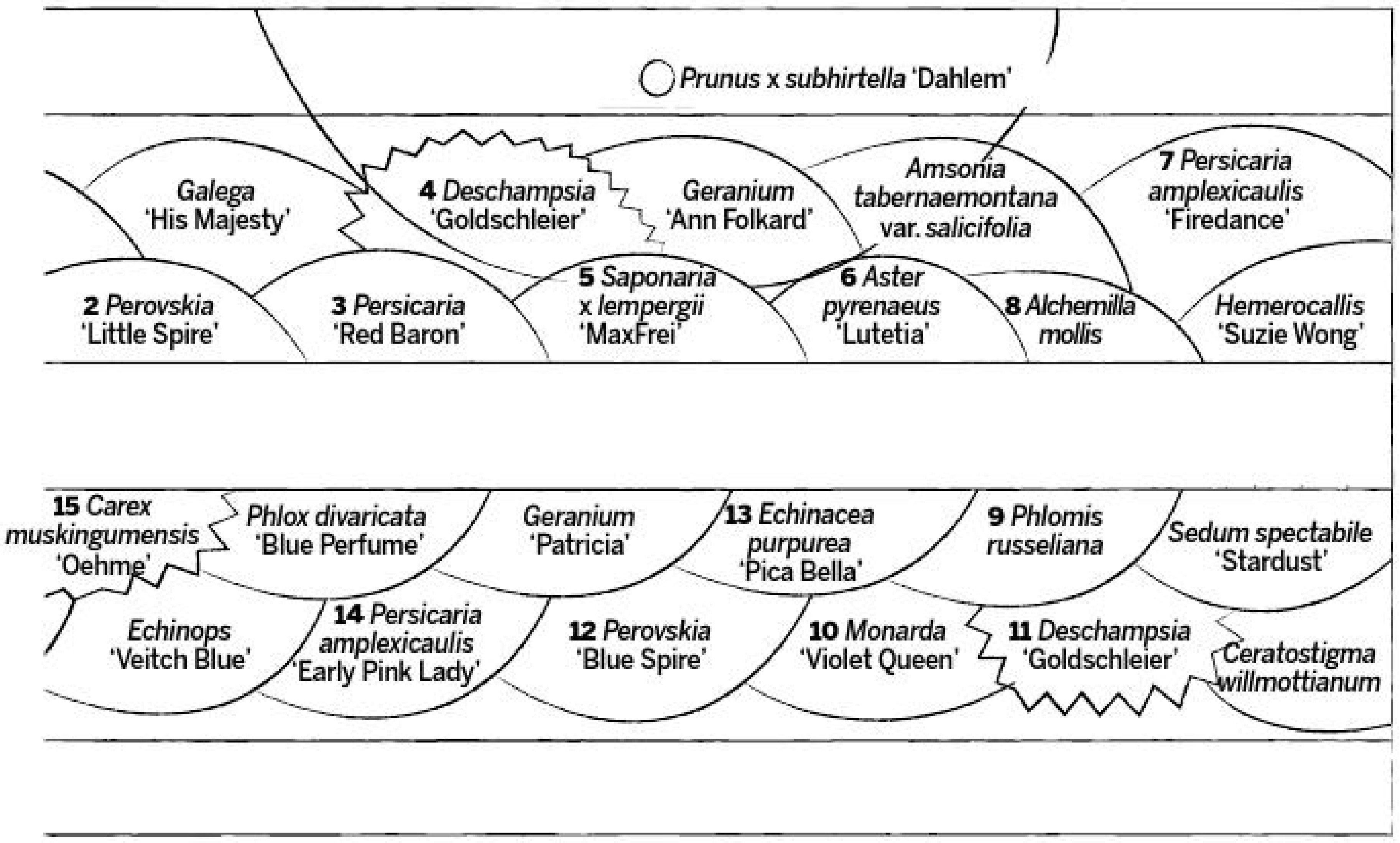

Prunus sargentii
Persicaria 'Fine Pink'
Geranium psilostemon
1 Miscanthus sinensis 'Morning Light'
Astrantia 'Roma'
Eupatorium maculatum 'Laag'
Alchemilla mollis
Limonium latifolium
Phlomis russeliana
Aster divaricatus
Sedum 'Matrona'
Geranium 'Dilys'
Deschampsia 'Goldschleier'
18 Perscaria amplexicaulis 'Red Baron'
16 Aster pyrenaeus 'Lutetia'
Gypsophila 'Rosenschleier'
Stipa gigantea
Helenium 'Flammendes Katchen'
17 Eupatorium maculatum 'Laag'
Geranium 'Nimbus'
Phlox x arendsii 'Hesperis'
Veronicastrum virginicum 'Fascination'




Prunus x subhirtella 'Dahlem'
Galega 'His Majesty'
4 Deschampsia 'Goldschleier'
Geranium 'Ann Folkard'
Amsonia tabernaemontana var. salicifolia
7 Persicaria amplexicaulis 'Firedance'
2 Perovskia 'Little Spire'
3 Persicaria 'Red Baron'
5 Saponaria x lempergii 'MaxFrei'
6 Aster pyrenaeus 'Lutetia'
8 Alchemilla mollis
Hemerocallis 'Suzie Wong'
15 Carex muskingumensis 'Oehme'
Phlox divaricata 'Blue Perfume'
Geranium 'Patricia'
13 Echinacea purpurea 'Pica Bella'
9 Phlomis russeliana
Sedum spectabile 'Stardust'
Echinops 'Veitch Blue'
14 Persicaria amplexicaulis 'Early Pink Lady'
12 Perovskia 'Blue Spire'
10 Monarda 'Violet Queen'
11 Deschampsia 'Goldschleier'
Ceratostigma willmottianum

Border plants

1 *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Morning Light'
Compact perennial with narrow leaves edged with white. AGM*. RHS H6, USDA 5a-9b†.

2 *Perovskia* 'Little Spire'
Silver-grey leaves and upright spikes of tiny violet-blue flowers.

3 *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Red Baron'
Compact plant with dense spikes of rich red.

4 *Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Goldschleier'
Clump-forming evergreen grass.

5 *Saponaria* x *lempergii* 'Max Frei'
Pink five-petalled flowers on hairy stems.

6 *Aster pyrenaeus* 'Lutetia'
Plentifully produced palest pink daisies.

7 *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Firedance'
Orange-red flowers on branching stems.

8 *Alchemilla mollis*
Hairy light green leaves with scalloped and toothed edges. AGM. RHS H6, USDA 3a-8b.

9 *Phlomis russeliana*
Hairy perennial with rough-textured grey-green leaves. AGM. RHS H7, USDA 4a-9b.

10 *Monarda* 'Violet Queen'
Purple-tinged foliage and attractive seedheads. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 4a-9b.

11 *Deschampsia* 'Goldschleier' As above.

12 *Perovskia* 'Little Spire' See 2 above.

13 *Echinacea purpurea* 'Pica Bella'
Mauve-pink coneflower in upright clumps.

14 *Persicaria amplexicaulis* 'Early Pink Lady'
Semi-evergreen foliage with flowers that redden in autumn.

15 *Carex muskingumensis* 'Oehme'
Starts as a green sedge then develops distinct yellow stripes along the margins.

16 *Aster pyrenaeus* 'Lutetia' See 6 above.

17 *Eupatorium maculatum* 'Laag'
Purple blooms that make striking cut flowers.

18 *Persicaria* 'Red Baron' See 3 above.

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*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

Rich colours come to the fore in the planting at Priory House with purple *Lythrum salicaria* 'Feuerkerze' and pink *Sedum telephium* Atropurpureum Group 'Bon Bon' prominent.

Orderly glory

This walled garden achieves great beauty through a sense of order, with a place for everything and everything in its place

WORDS **LIA LEENDERTZ** PHOTOGRAPHS **LYNN KEDDIE**

In brief

What Walled garden to a Regency townhouse.
Where Bradford-upon-Avon, Wiltshire.
Size About 1 acre.
Climate South-east facing so doesn't get too hot, but sheltered from prevailing winds by a huge *Liriodendron*.
Soil Slightly alkaline and very friable soil. Extremely well drained.
Points of interest Colour themed borders in a central formal garden, and woodland planting at the edges.

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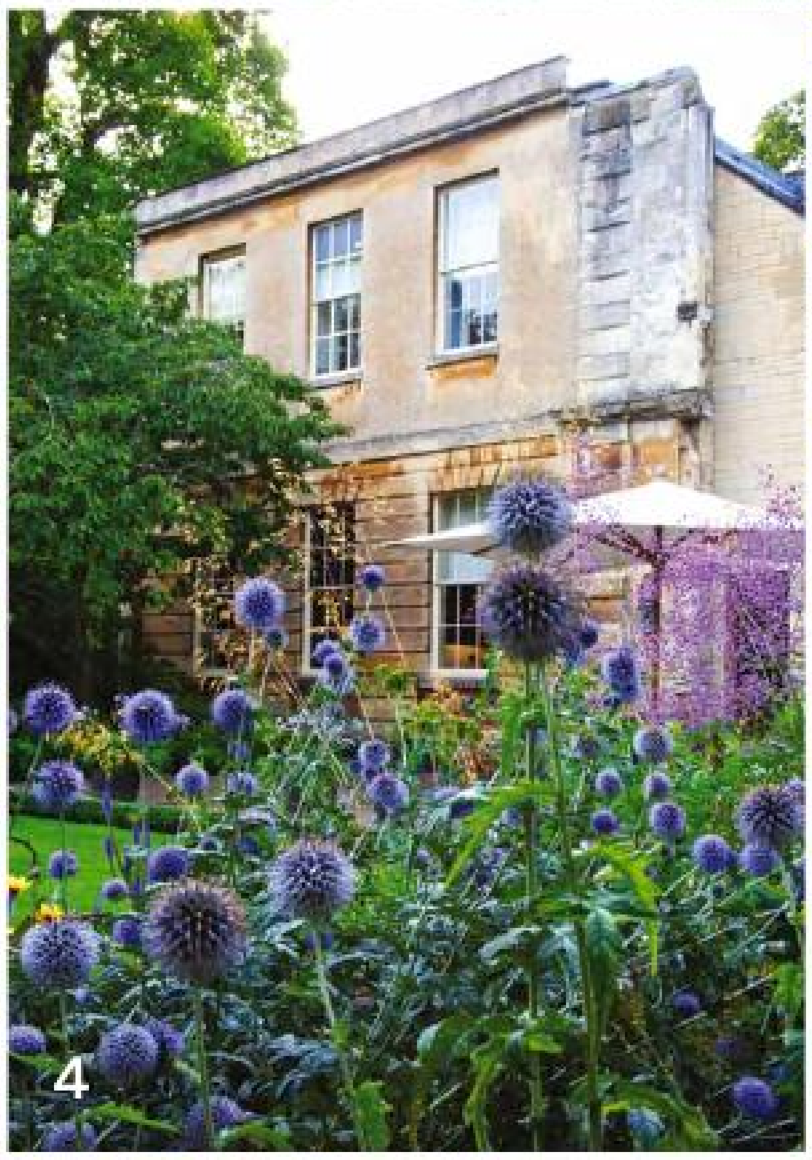
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The beds in the formal area of the garden are planted as a mirror image of each other.

On the days when it rains Jenny bakes, and then freezes the cakes, ready for her garden openings

Jenny Woodall loves symmetry. Perfectly proportioned borders fall either side of her lawn, which is itself dissected by sightlines that cut across at perfect right angles, each ending in a focal point. Every individual border is a child's folded butterfly painting, with clumps of miscanthus, phlox and agapanthus as the mirrored paint splodges. It is strong, ordered and calm.

But Jenny is self-effacing about her creation. "I am not so confident about design," she says, "so I put in lots of straight lines, and lots of mirror images." She says she wrestles with the geometry of the house which, although a large Regency townhouse with big, symmetrical rooms and windows, has a modern extension which has skewed it so that the back door sits off-centre to the garden. "There is nothing I can do about it, the house is Grade 2 listed, but I would love a central back door." She has been forced to plough on with her perfectly squared off design in the face of this imperfection. Of course this flaw is entirely unnoticeable to the outsider's eye: the garden's presence is so strong that it more than counters any lopsidedness (which had to be pointed out to me) but it marks Jenny out as the perfectionist she is.

"I can't bear to see a weed. I won't tolerate it," she says, and with such high standards she has to put the time in. "I work in the garden five days a week. I do the lawns, the edging, everything. I like a stripe in my lawn." For Christmas she received metal lawn edgings, enough to edge the whole garden. "I do like nice jewellery, but I prefer sharp lawn edges," she says. On the days when it rains Jenny bakes, and then freezes the cakes, ready for her garden openings. Her love of the garden openings has even affected the design of the garden, which boasts a generous terrace especially designed to leave plenty of room on which her visitors can take teas and eat those rainy-day cakes.

The terrace has another function: it covers the foundations of a much older part of the house, which was here before the modern extension was built. "There are filled-in cellars and foundations here that make it impossible to garden." The result is this terrace, covering a third of the formal garden to the two thirds of lawn and borders.

While Jenny claims almost to have winged it to such a strong design, she is on more confident ground when using colour. "I like to use plants from a very similar colour range, for instance I use the same sorts of blues together, a lilacy blue with a hint of pink in it. I like things to tone." She has done the same in the hot borders close to the house, where shades of pink, raspberry and crimson run alongside each other in a riotous celebration of red, to luxurious and satisfying effect. ▷

1 *Echinacea purpurea* 'Fatal Attraction' and *Penstemon* 'Schoenholzeri' crowd to the front in shades of pink.

2 A large *Prunus* hangs over the spring garden.

3 The garden features an informal woodland walk.

4 A view of the back of the house, with *Echinops ritro* in the foreground.

5 The herbaceous border with pale pink *Phlox paniculata* 'Bright Eyes'.

6 The entrance to the garden weaves through topiary in lead-style containers.

7 *Helenium* 'Red Jewel', *Penstemon* 'Schoenholzeri' and *Sedum telephium* Atropurpureum Group 'Bon Bon'.

The pergola provides a boundary between the formal and more relaxed areas of the garden.

▷ A large pergola runs the entire boundary of the formal garden, providing shade and shelter to a broad walkway. It encloses the inner part of the garden design, and beyond this Jenny allows things to get a little looser. These areas are shaded by some large trees and so contain a good few woodland plants "though in spring you would see that even here this is the pink bed, and this is the white bed," she confides. Habits die hard.

Fittingly then, the herbaceous borders are her real love, or at least the tinkering with them. "I adore them, but it is hard to get them right," she says, while clearly relishing the thought. "They were the first things I did here but they still need more work." She sees them with a pragmatic eye: "I am completely unsentimental about plants. I might find something the best thing since sliced bread one year, and then have completely gone off it a few years later."

So however vibrant and perfect these plants may look, they had better not get too comfortable; Jenny's joy in playing with colour means this is a garden that is rarely static. "I want the best garden I can possibly have, and so I have to keep refining. I can almost hear the plants groan when I come along with my spade each winter." □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Priory House, Market Street, Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire BA15 1LH.
Contact Jenny and Tim Woodall.
Email trwwoodall@yahoo.com
Open Sunday 4 August, 2-5:30pm.

Dividing up space

Jenny has used both plants and hard materials to split the garden into distinct areas. "I like rooms in a garden. I don't like to see the whole of it all in one go," she says. Her main trick in doing this has been the erection of a vast three-sided pergola, which covers a walkway running along three sides of the garden, and dividing it into a formal inner garden and woodland-like outer garden. This is draped in clematis and roses. She also has a trellis covered in ivy.

Because the garden is in a conservation area Jenny has been wary of putting in any large trees or permanent hedges. "I feel the garden is too small for big hedges anyway, and I am not allowed to take down any large trees, which makes me worry about planting more." Instead she has made use of perennials with a big presence. She is particularly fond of grasses such as *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Morning Light' with its minty variegated leaves, which create screening opportunities. "Their waving flower heads almost block the view. They make me want to see what is around the next corner," she says.

9 of Jenny's favourite plants for August

1 *Phlox paniculata* 'Bright Eyes'
I love this plant and it is in flower for months. A soft pink flower with a darker pink eye. AGM*. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b†.

2 *Stipa gigantea*
I use this to create height in the garden, and also to help screen areas. I love the colour changes it goes through. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 5a-10b.

3 *Penstemon* 'Schoenholzeri'
Although this is a bright colour it doesn't shout at you, and I use it a little like wallpaper. It's a lovely colour against which to show off other flowers. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 4a-9b.

4 *Agapanthus* 'Streamline'
I love agapanthus, and grow them in large clumps through the borders. This year I am also trying out a new cultivar 'Catharina', with upright, well-behaved foliage and chunky stems.

5 *Phlox paniculata* 'Harlequin'
This has variegated foliage and flowers of the most peculiar purple. I'm moving it out of the blue beds and into the hot beds, where I think it will sit better. It's a lovely thing. USDA 4a-8b.

6 *Nicotiana langsdorffii*
In summer this annual is smothered in tiny acid green flowers. It's a plant I love using in among herbaceous plants. AGM. USDA 9a-11.

7 *Echinacea purpurea* 'Fatal Attraction'
This is a very strong pink and I like using it in the hot borders. It also dies well, and has a great skeleton all through winter. USDA 4a-9b.

8 *Solidago* x *luteus* 'Lemore'
This is a cross between a solidago and an aster. It is a much finer plant that a solidago, more plumey. It's a big favourite. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 3A-9B.

9 *Dahlia* 'Waltzing Matilda'
This is quite a crazy flower but I love it. It has an unusual colour, not quite orange or pink or red, but somewhere in between. The petals have a slightly ragged look.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

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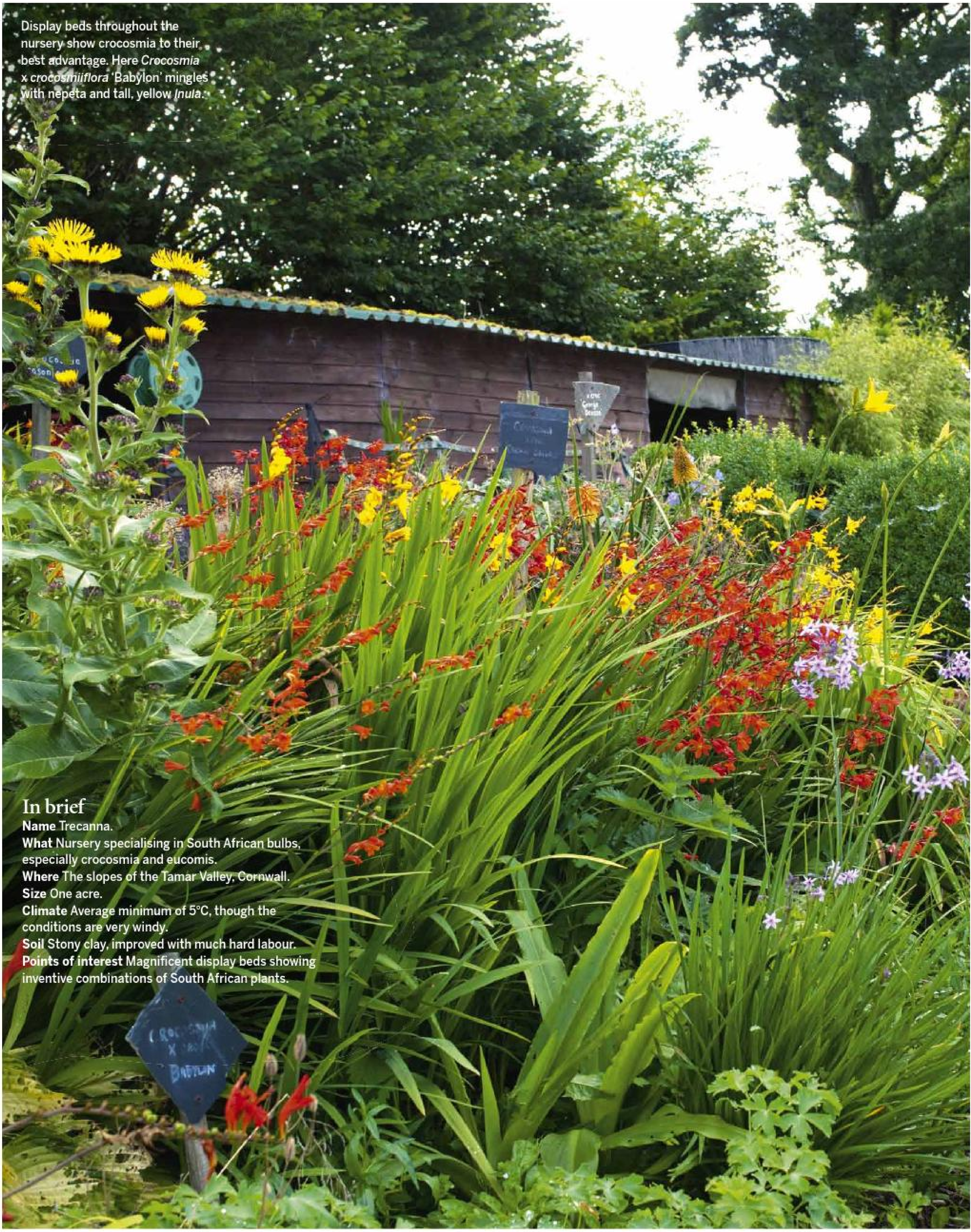
2 NEIL HOLMES 4 DETAIL PHOTOGRAPHY 9 JOHN MARTIN. ALL ALAMY



Display beds throughout the nursery show crocosmia to their best advantage. Here *Crocosmia x crocosmiiflora* 'Babylon' mingles with nepeta and tall, yellow *Inula*.

In brief

Name Trecanna.
What Nursery specialising in South African bulbs, especially crocosmia and eucomis.
Where The slopes of the Tamar Valley, Cornwall.
Size One acre.
Climate Average minimum of 5°C, though the conditions are very windy.
Soil Stony clay, improved with much hard labour.
Points of interest Magnificent display beds showing inventive combinations of South African plants.

Hidden depths

The Cornish flag flutters over Trecanna Nursery, where Mark Wash looks after a superb collection of beautiful crocosmia

WORDS AMBRA EDWARDS PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREA JONES

You would have thought that someone who works in the order of 16 hours a day, outdoors, in one of the wetter spots on the planet, might like a lie-in-the-sun-and-do-nothing sort of holiday.

Not Mark Wash. His idea of refreshment before the hectic summer show season starts is to travel round Madagascar, by plane, helicopter and ox cart, searching for *Crocosmia ambongensis* – the rarest of the seven known species of crocosmia (the other six all grow in South Africa). Having narrowed things down to "an area half the size of Devon" he has every hope of success.

But Mark has always been one to row his own canoe (quite literally, on these occasions). As a commercial bulb buyer in the chintzy 1980s, when orange was frowned upon in the garden, Mark found himself drawn to the unfashionably fiery shades of crocosmia, admiring the elegant sword-like form of *C.* 'Lucifer' and herringbone flower arrangement of *C.* 'Emberglow' (both introduced by Alan Bloom in the 1970s) and noting how they "filled a gap from July, when all the bulbs and perennials had really finished their work, until September, when other things took over."

As his interest (and collection) grew, he travelled to South Africa to study the bulbs in the wild. "The species are all incredibly different, and when you're crossing them, understanding their different flowering times and flower shapes and the different altitudes they grow at, has a direct bearing on their size, their habit, whether they'll tolerate shade, or wet, and how much cold they will cope with."

For the last ten years, Mark has been growing and breeding crocosmia on the banks of the Tamar – on the Cornish side, of course, where montbretia (*Crocosmia* x *crocosmiiflora*) romps wild in the hedgerows. These unruly habits have given crocosmia a bad name – quite unjustly, as Mark is at pains to point out. "They don't all increase at a scary rate. Some of the nicest ones bulk up very slowly, such as 'Rowallane Yellow' or ▷

Pleasing partners

Crocosmia look good with other South African plants that enjoy the same growing conditions, such as *Eucomis* and *Tulbaghia*; with rusty coloured heleniums or yellow, starry coreopsis. But Mark especially likes to grow them with *Verbena bonariensis*. "It's the opposite side of the colour wheel so the colour contrast is perfect: yellow, copper, orange or red all go well with it. The height is right and the fact that it flowers June to October means it doesn't matter whether your crocosmia is early, mid-season or late. It's a fabulous combination."

Croscosmia 'Ellenbank Firecrest' has small golden-yellow flowers with petals edged in orange.

▷ statuesque 'Zeal Giant', which forms enormous corms the size of a jacket potato, though very few. In fact, it's hard to think of a plant that is less trouble in the garden. They don't suffer in the way of pests and diseases – rabbits and deer don't like them; slugs rarely touch them. They are tolerant of salt and wind – tall ones like 'Lucifer' will grow on top of a cliff and never snap. And, provided you plant deep and mulch well, they're hardy in the ground down to -15°C, so you can grow them fairly well anywhere.

"Most interesting to me," says Mark, "are the different shapes and habits of the plants. While some stand upright, others are very arching, and look marvellous planted on a steep bank, where you can look up at them.

"The foliage is very varied too. Far from just a sword-shaped leaf, some of them are pleated, some are flat, some tend to point downwards, some arch upwards; some are a blue-grey colour, some an apple green – so long before and after the flower, the leaves make an attractive focal point in the garden."

But surely the point of crocosmia is its bold and brilliant colour? Bold but not brash, insists Mark. There are many pleasingly subtle bi-colours, while the brightest colours can be mediated by delicacy of flower-shape, such as the graceful reflexed petals of 'Cornish Copper'.

"The colours I'm interested in at the moment," explains Mark, "are the coppery tones and the salmons, that you can use with russet grasses and purple-leaved plants to create quite different effects from the hot, fiery borders we've been used to."

He would also like to see more appreciation of crocosmia's beautiful seedheads – varieties like 'Prince of Orange', 'Ellenbank Firecrest' and 'Scarlet Wonder' all offer elegant sprays of fruits for months after the flowers have faded.

"Most British gardens peak in the spring and quieten down in the summer," observes Mark. "This is a way to make summer the highlight of your garden, or at least to keep it going many months longer. What other plant gives so many months of interest, from the fine architectural foliage, to the diamond arrangement of buds before they open, to the amazing seedheads when they finish?

"And they're easy: what other plant do you know that tolerates rabbits, wind and weather, needs little care, and will give years of pleasure? How can you go wrong?" ☐

USEFUL INFORMATION

Trecanna Nursery, Latchley, Nr Gunnislake,
Cornwall PL18 9AX.

Open Trecanna Nursery is not open to visitors at present, while Mark is moving plants to a new nursery site further down the Tamar Valley. However, orders can be placed and sent by mail order as usual, or collected from shows. **Tel** 01822 834680.

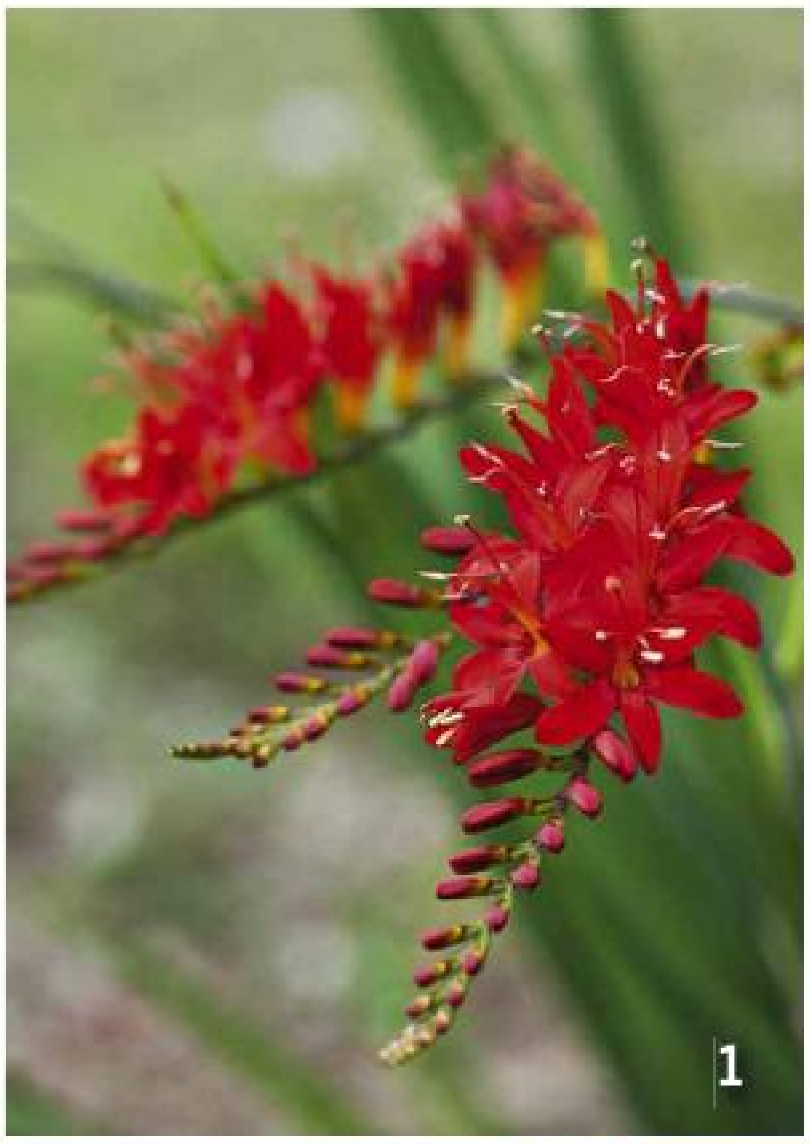
Website www.trecanna.com

Mark's advice on growing crocosmia

There's this idea that because they come from South Africa, they like baking in a hot, dry border, but nothing could be further from the truth. Many grow by water and – to do really well – the roots like to get down into some moisture. They will cope with dry shade, but won't flower at their best. So the ideal spot is sunny, but shaded for some part of the day, in soil that is well drained but has some substance, and won't dry to dust in the summer. Plant them deeply, adding plenty of compost, and topping with a good thick mulch. A sprinkle of bonemeal in spring will improve flowering.

When a crocus dies down in winter, the old corm will shrivel away and a new one form on top, but with crocosmia the old corms persist and act as storage organs, so you end up with long chains, reaching deep into the ground, with the growth coming mainly from the top ones. So every three or four years, dig up the clump in autumn as the leaves die back, split off any you don't want and replant the whole clump so that the top corm is at least 10cm deep. That keeps the plants on their toes and you get more flowers.

Crocosmia grow well in pots, but need protection below about -5°C. They're dormant in winter, so you can just tuck away the pots in the garage or greenhouse. In the ground, our bulbs have come through Cornwall's two coldest winters unscathed.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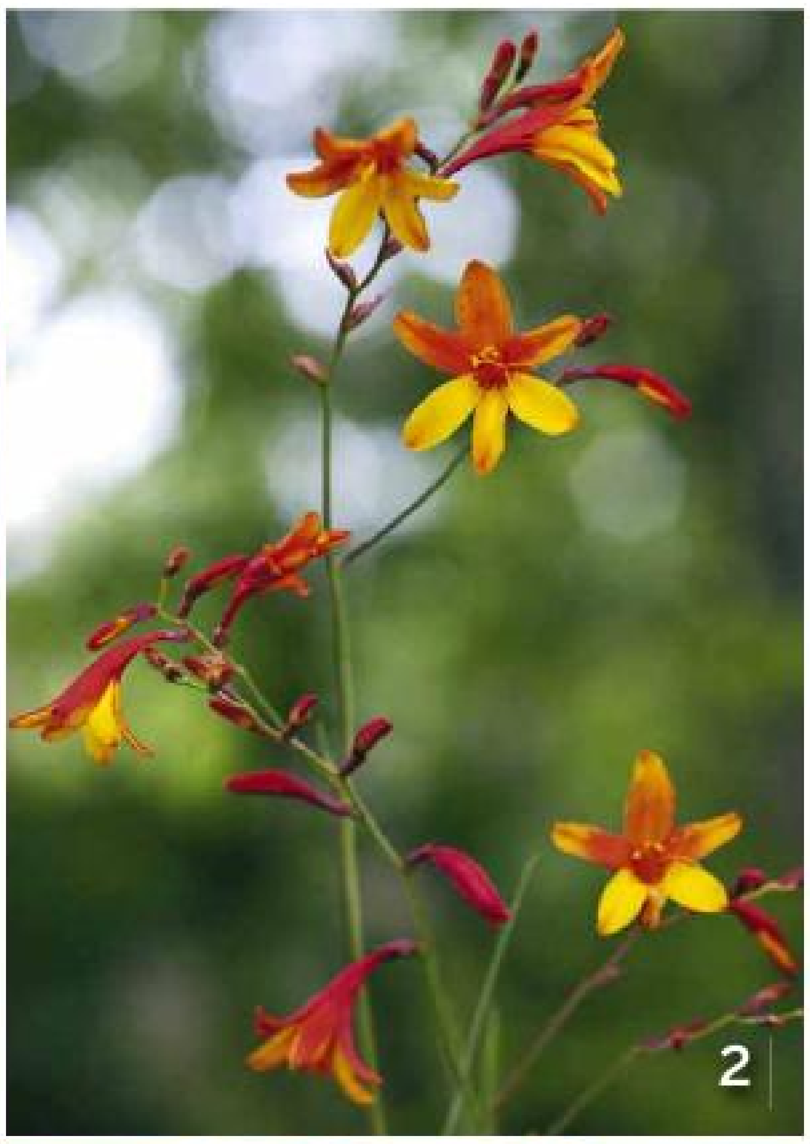
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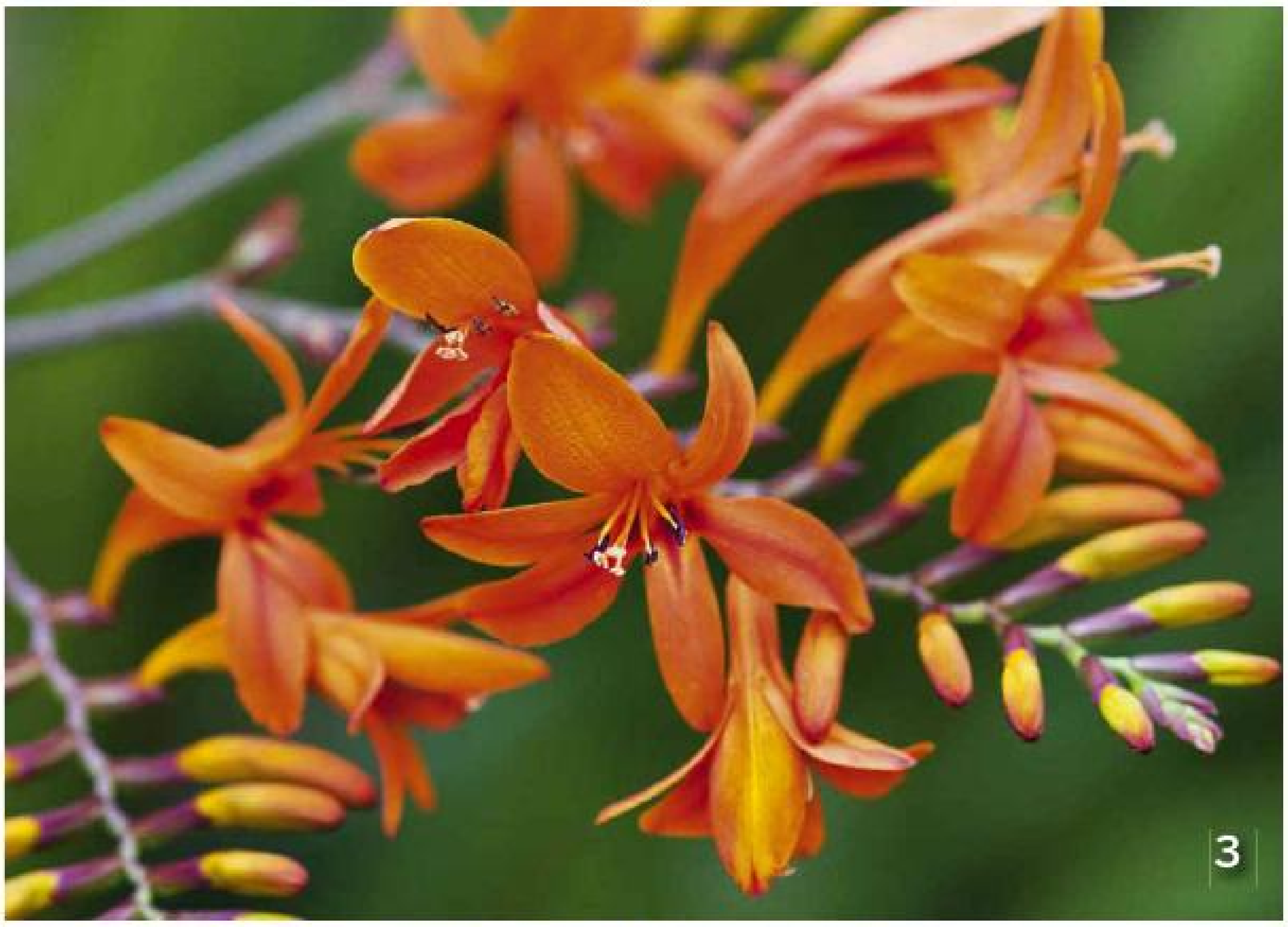
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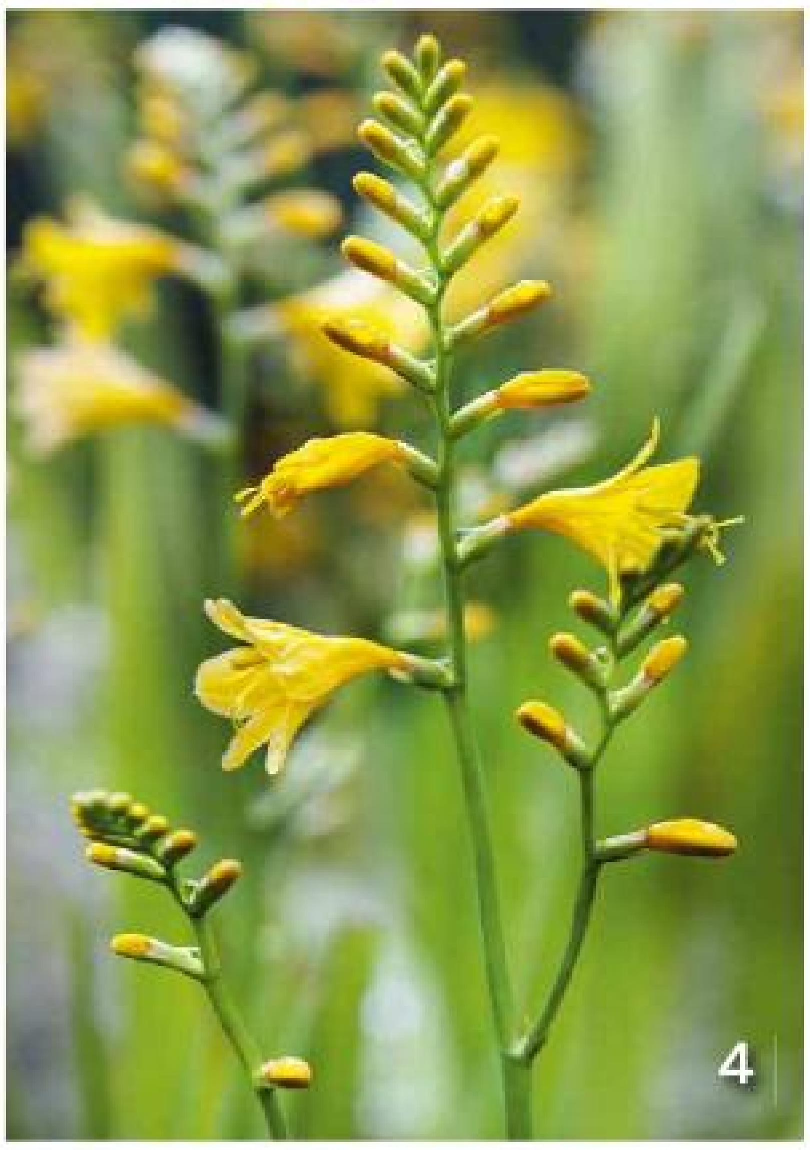
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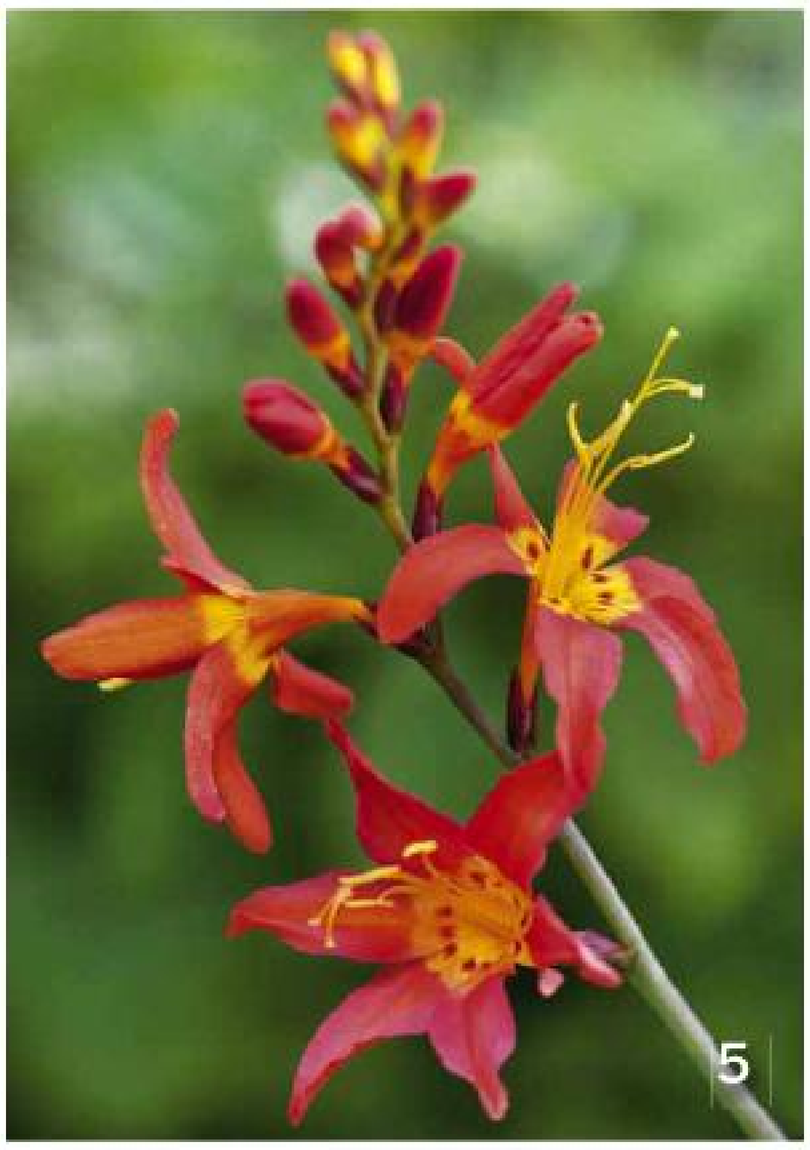
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15 of Mark's favourite crocosmia

Crocosmia offer a long flowering season: **Early** from mid-June; **Mid** July and August; **Late** late August to Sept-Oct.

1 *Crocosmia masonorum* 'Dixter Flame'
GOOD FOR COLOUR
A Dixter seedling, with broad leaves and pure red flowers, raised by Christopher Lloyd from a batch of *C. masonorum* seedlings, and tried and tested in the most exacting hot borders of all. Mid-late season. Grows up to 75cm.

2 *C.* 'Tamar New Dawn'
Another exquisite hybrid, with delicate branched spikes of downward-facing, bi-coloured flowers, quite orchid-like in their refinement. Mid-season. 75-90cm.

3 *C.* 'Zeal Giant'
SPECTACULAR
This Devon-bred colossus makes a spectacular specimen plant. The huge branching flower spike arches downwards, emerging from striking ruffled and pleated leaves. Early season. 150-180cm. USDA 5a-9b[†].

4 *C.* x *crocosmiiflora* 'Mount Usher'
A short, upright plant. Many of the pale yellows are quite similar, the difference being chiefly in flowering time. Mid-season. 45-75cm.

5 *C.* 'Prince of Orange'
GOOD SEEDHEADS
This was introduced to Britain by Mark last year. Erect stems bear many large, sparkling, orange-red flowers with a distinct golden centre flecked with burgundy. Outstanding seedheads. Mid-season. 90cm.

6 *Crocosmia* 'Tamar Peace'

GOOD FOR SMALL FLOWERS

Most crocosmia have six petals, but this long-flowering variety has only four. Small starry flowers stand clear of the foliage on dainty stems, lending it an enchanting butterfly grace. Mid-season. 75-90cm.

7 *C.* 'Tamar Glow'

Masses of large flowers (up to 6cm across) in a pure, singing red are borne on tall, upright spikes above bright, pleated foliage. Brilliant, but not brash. Mid to late season. 90cm plus.

8 *C. masonorum*

This beautiful arching species crocosmia is now rare in the wild, where it grows on wet rock ledges – Mark has seen it growing only in a remote spot in the Eastern Cape, rather scarily known as 'Satan's Nek.' First collected in 1911, it is a parent of the famous 'Lucifer'. Mid-season. 75-90cm. AGM*. RHS H4, RHS 5a-9b.

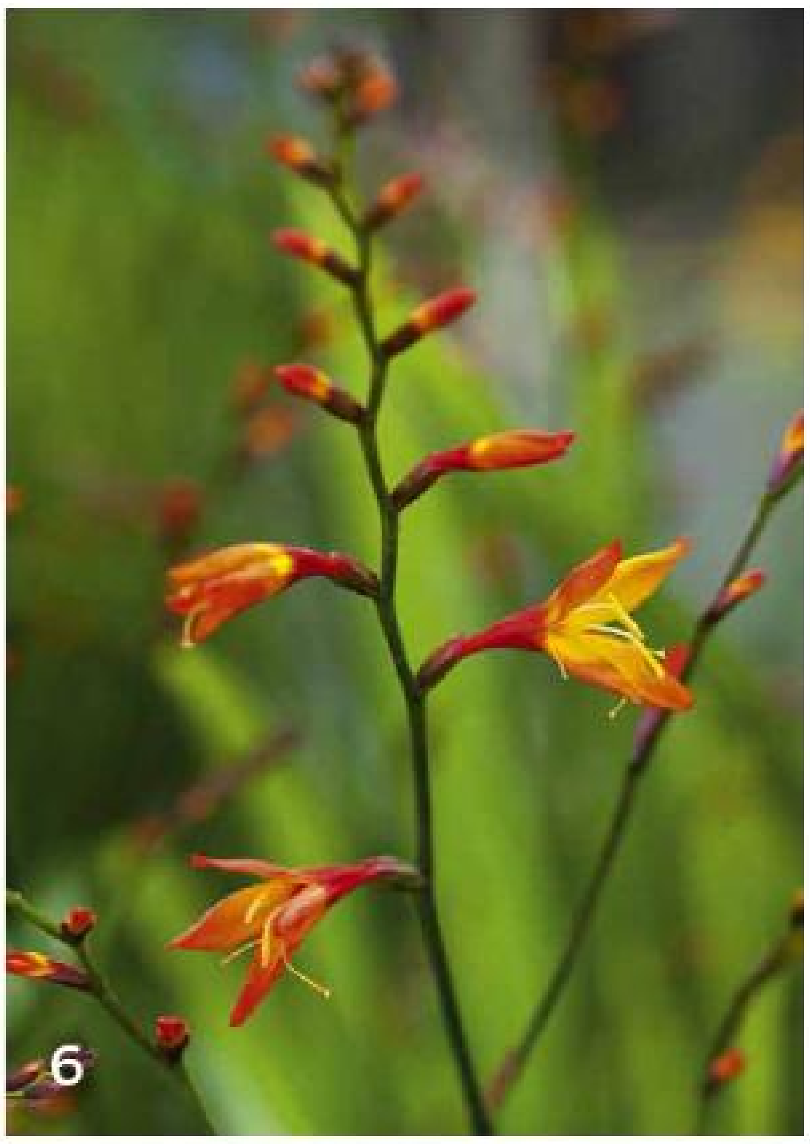
9 *C.* 'Cornish Copper'

GOOD FOR COPPER COLOUR

The coppery flowers are huge, almost 8cm across, but because the petals are reflexed, long and narrow, it remains light and graceful. Narrow, partly pleated leaves. Late season. 90-105cm.

10 *C. paniculata*

This tall species crocosmia is grown as a good luck plant in tribal villages throughout Southern Africa. It is pollinated by the malachite hummingbird, whose beak is the same shape as the flower. Mid-season. 120-150cm.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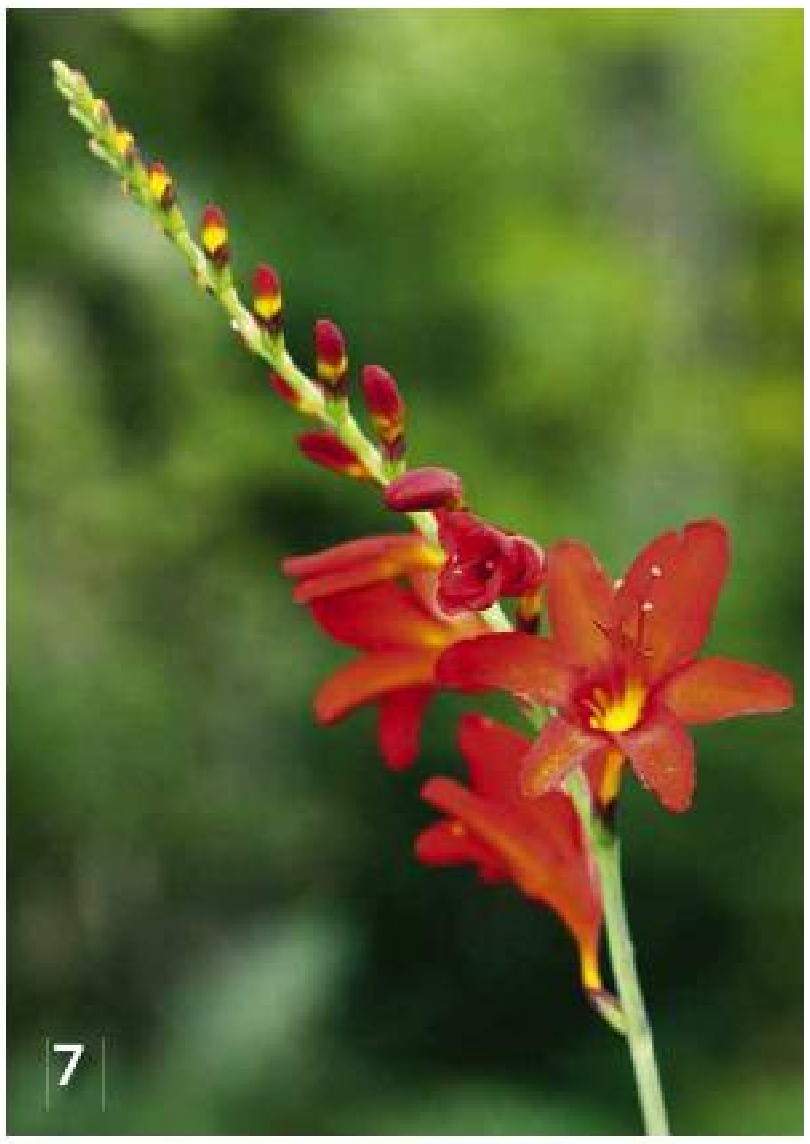
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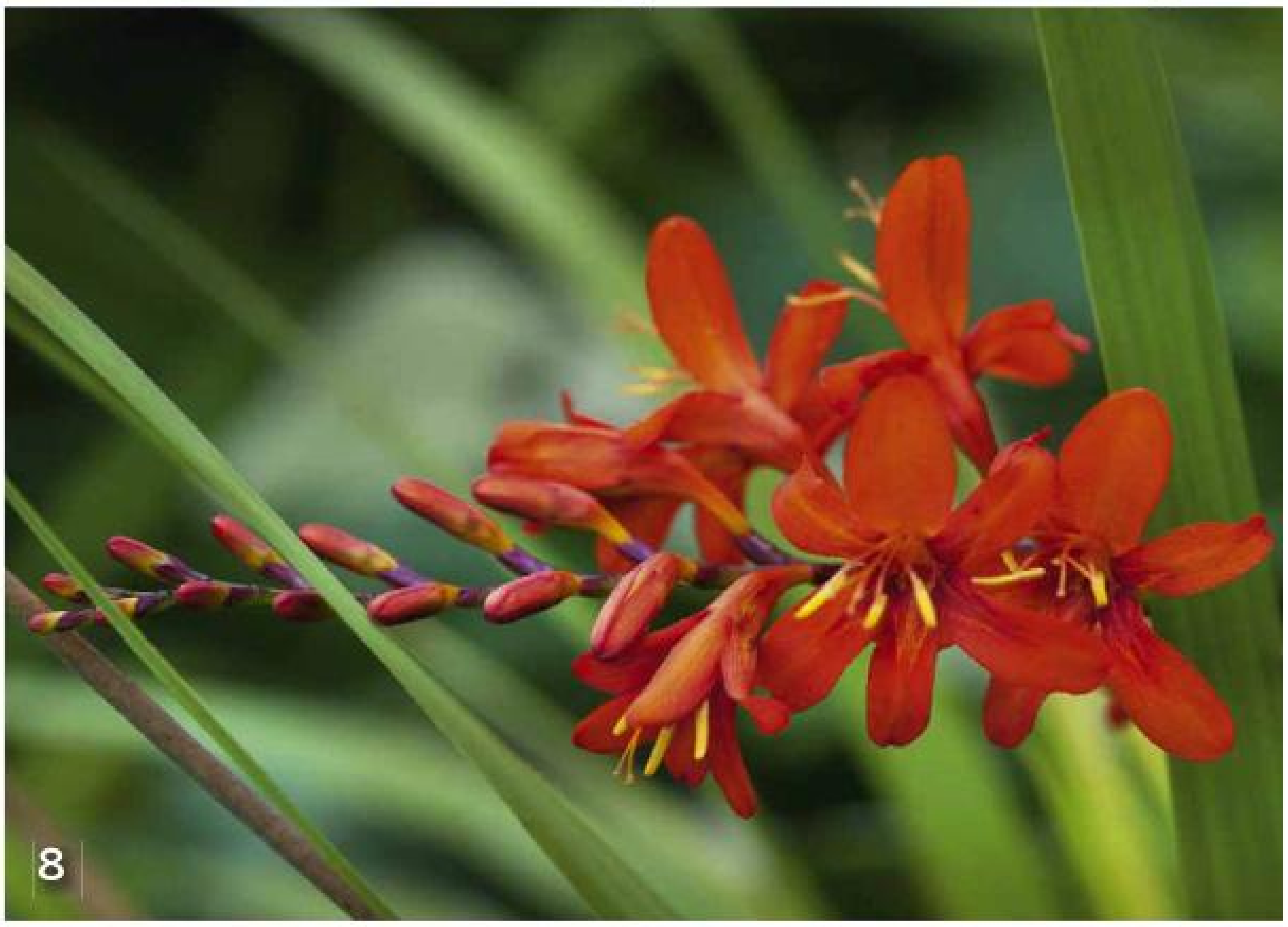
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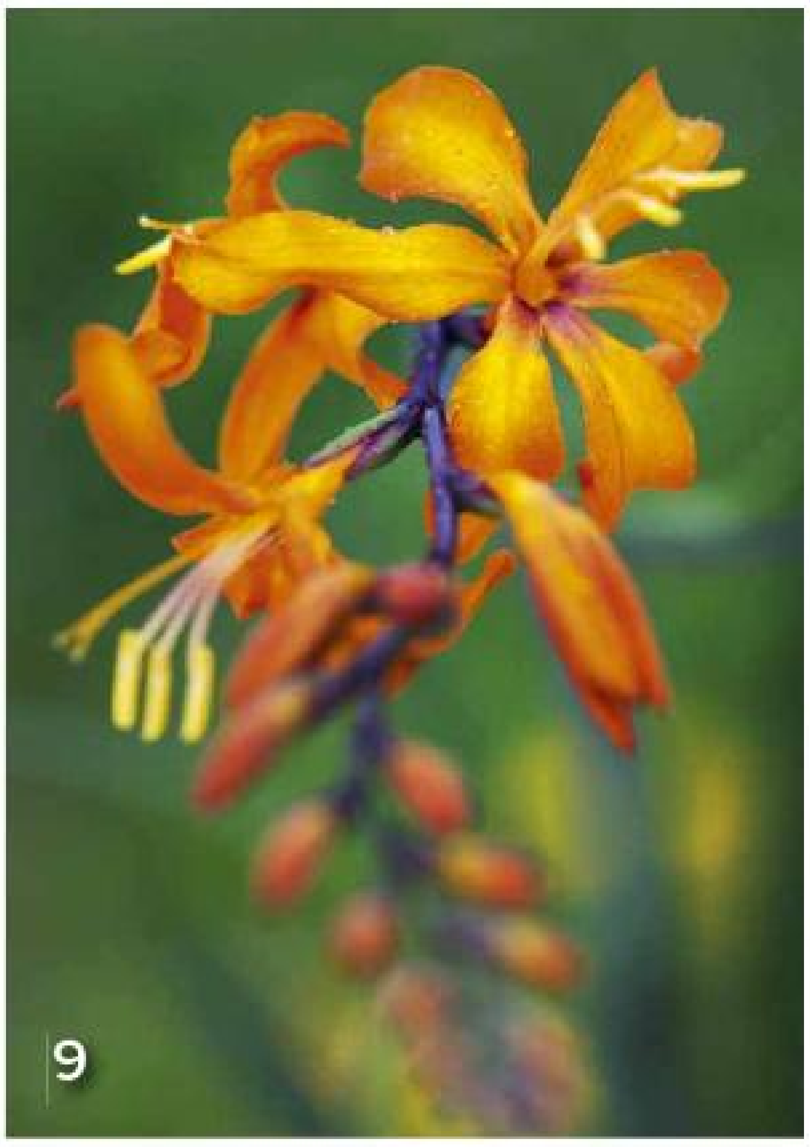
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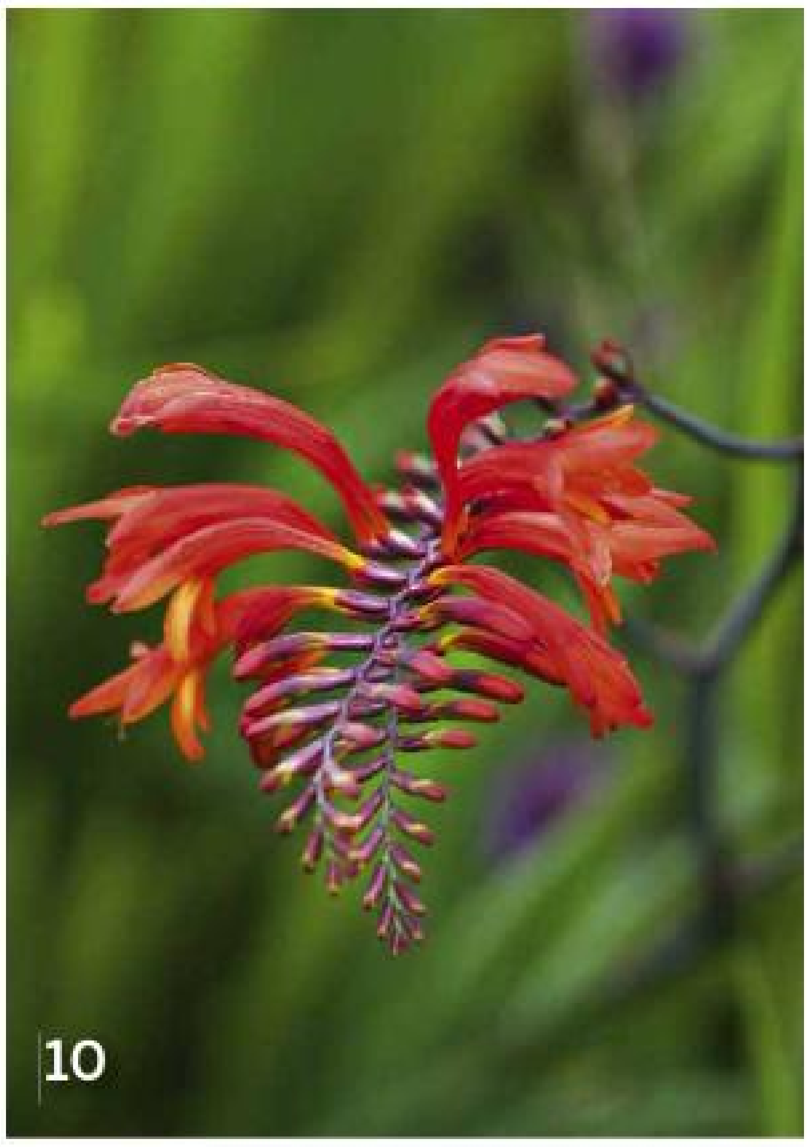
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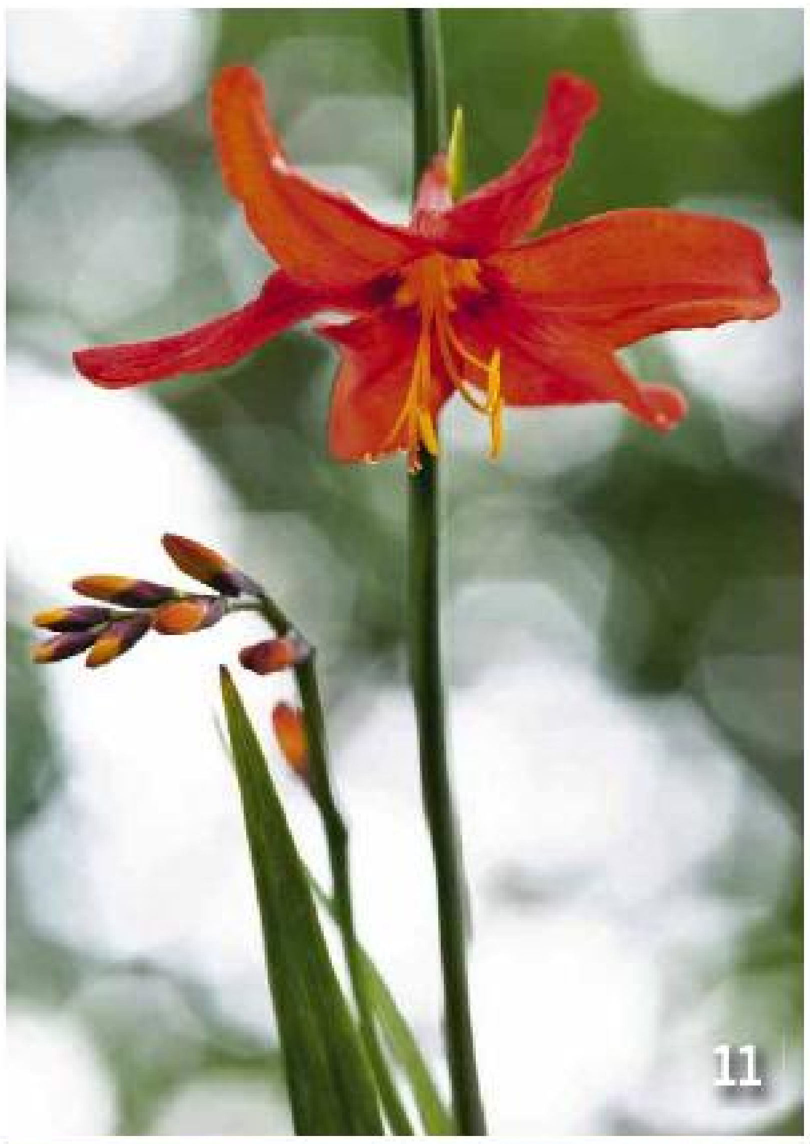
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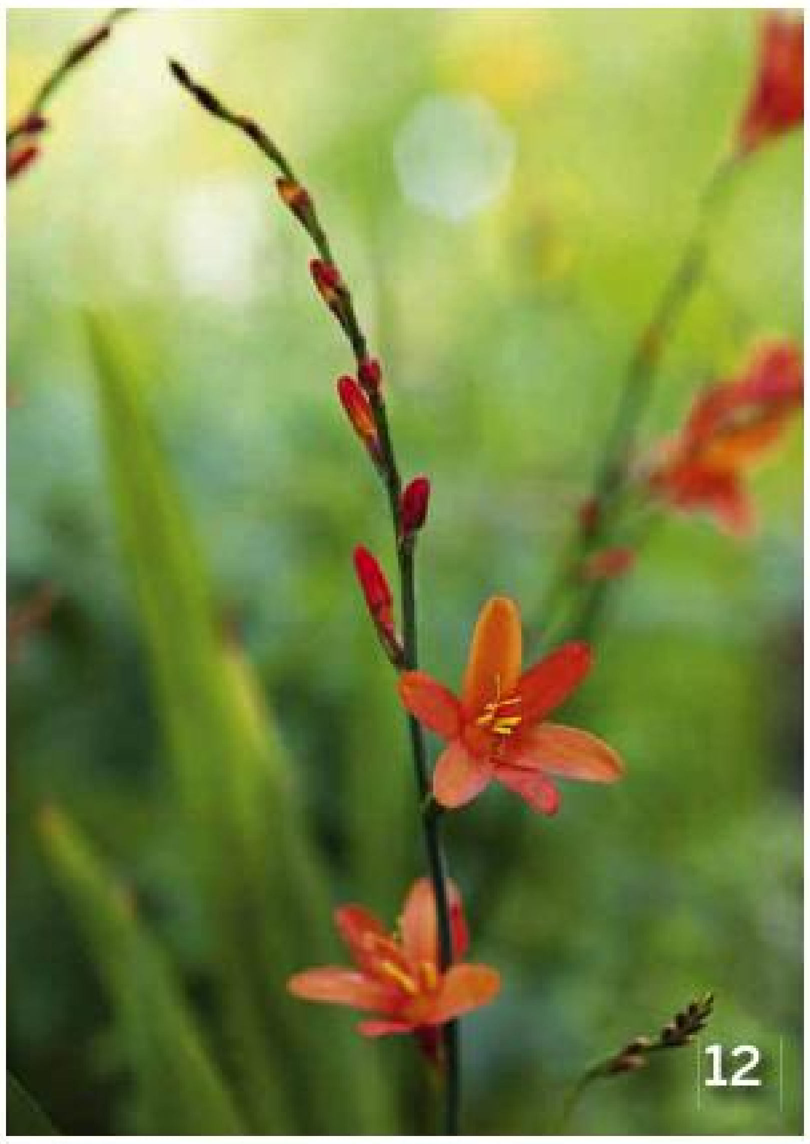
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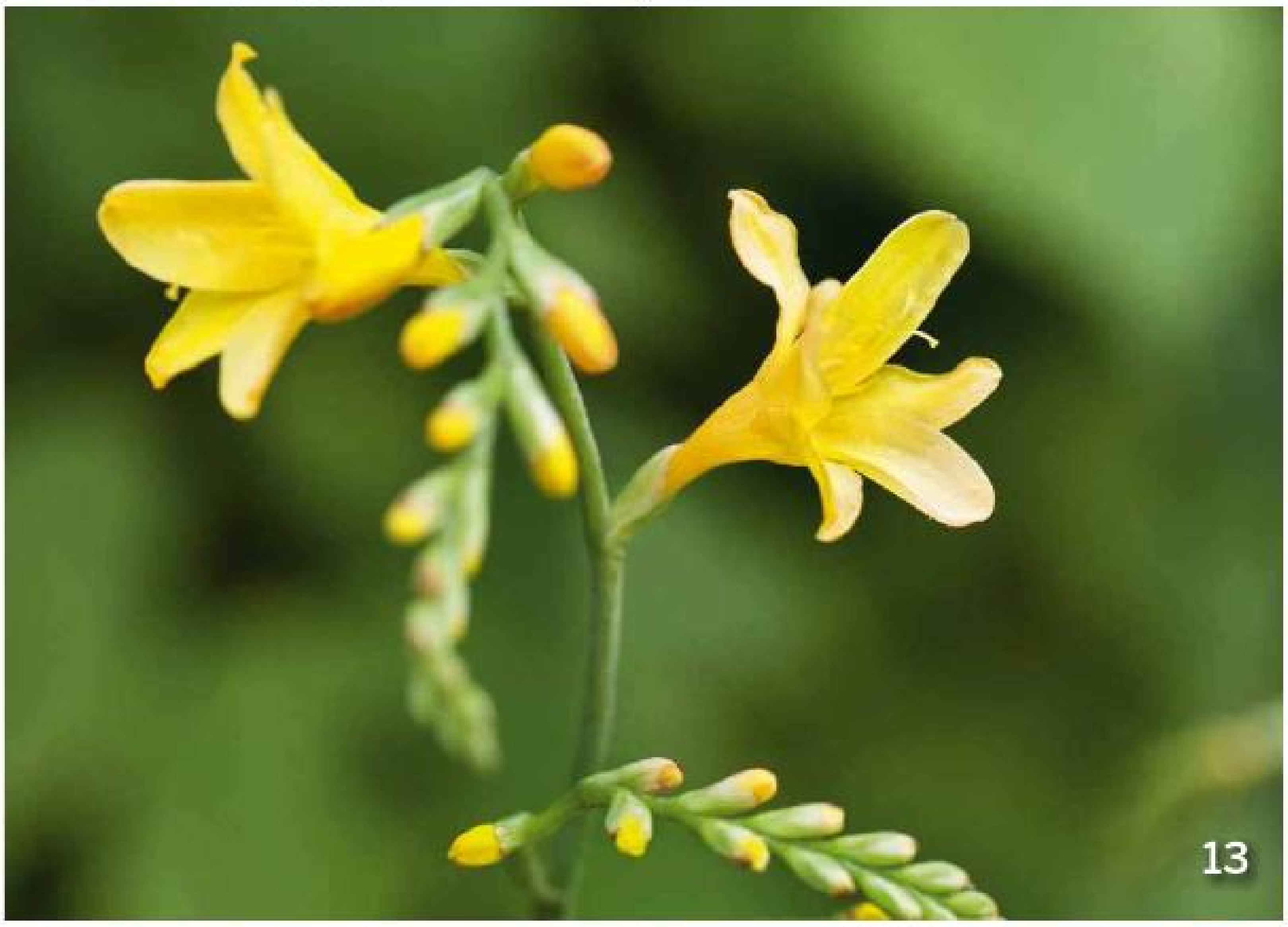
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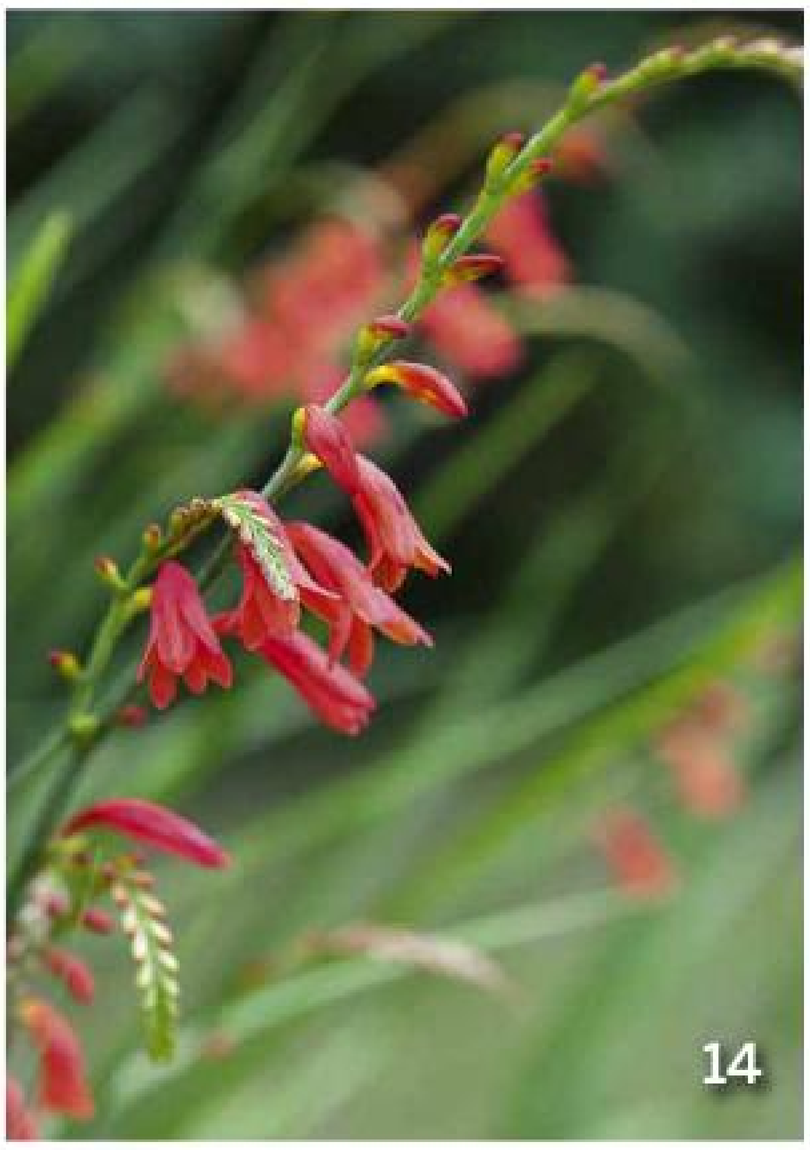
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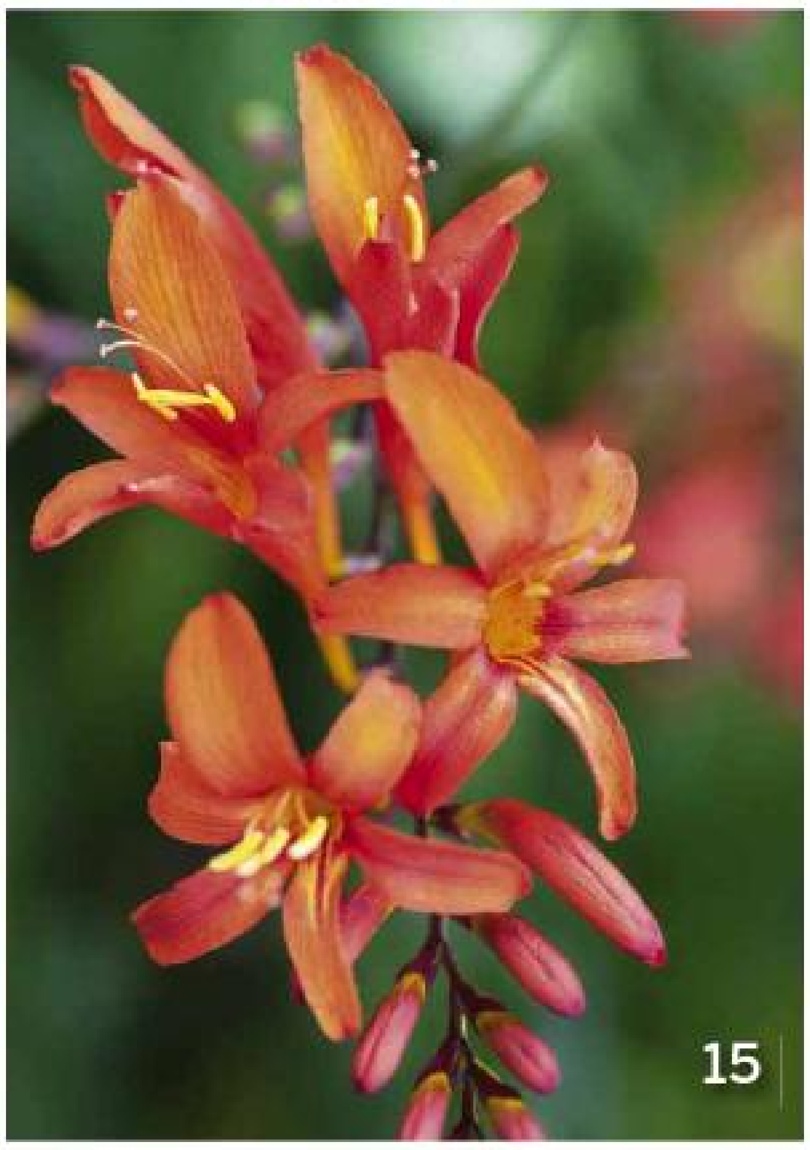
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11 *C.* x *crocosmiiflora* 'Babylon'

VIGOROUS GROWTH

A superb, strong-growing cultivar that has enormous orange-red flowers, with dark maroon markings and a yellow throat, set off by narrow, dusky leaves. Late season. 90cm.

12 *C.* x *c.* 'Debutante'

DELICATE CHARM

This well-named cultivar has a quiet charm – delicate and low growing, with an upward facing apricot flower that fades to pink. Late season. 45-75cm. USDA 5a-9b.

13 *C.* x *c.* 'Honey Angels'

A compact but vigorous cultivar with very bright green foliage and masses of small tubular flowers in a really clear, soft yellow that combines sublimely with the blues of agapanthus. Late season. 60-75cm. RHS H3, USDA 5a-9b.

14 *C. pottsii* 'Culzean Pink'

GOOD FOR MOIST SOIL

There are no true pinks in crocosmia – this is more coral, though noticeably pinker earlier in the season. Descended from *C. pottsii*, which grows along streamsides in the wild, it does best in moist soil. Early season. 90-120cm.

15 *C.* 'Zeal Unnamed'

Tall with handsome pleated leaves and arching spikes of up to 30 deep salmon flowers borne on maroon stems. The last of breeder Terry Jones' legacy of outstanding crocosmia hybrids. Early season. 120cm.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.

†Hardiness ratings given where available.

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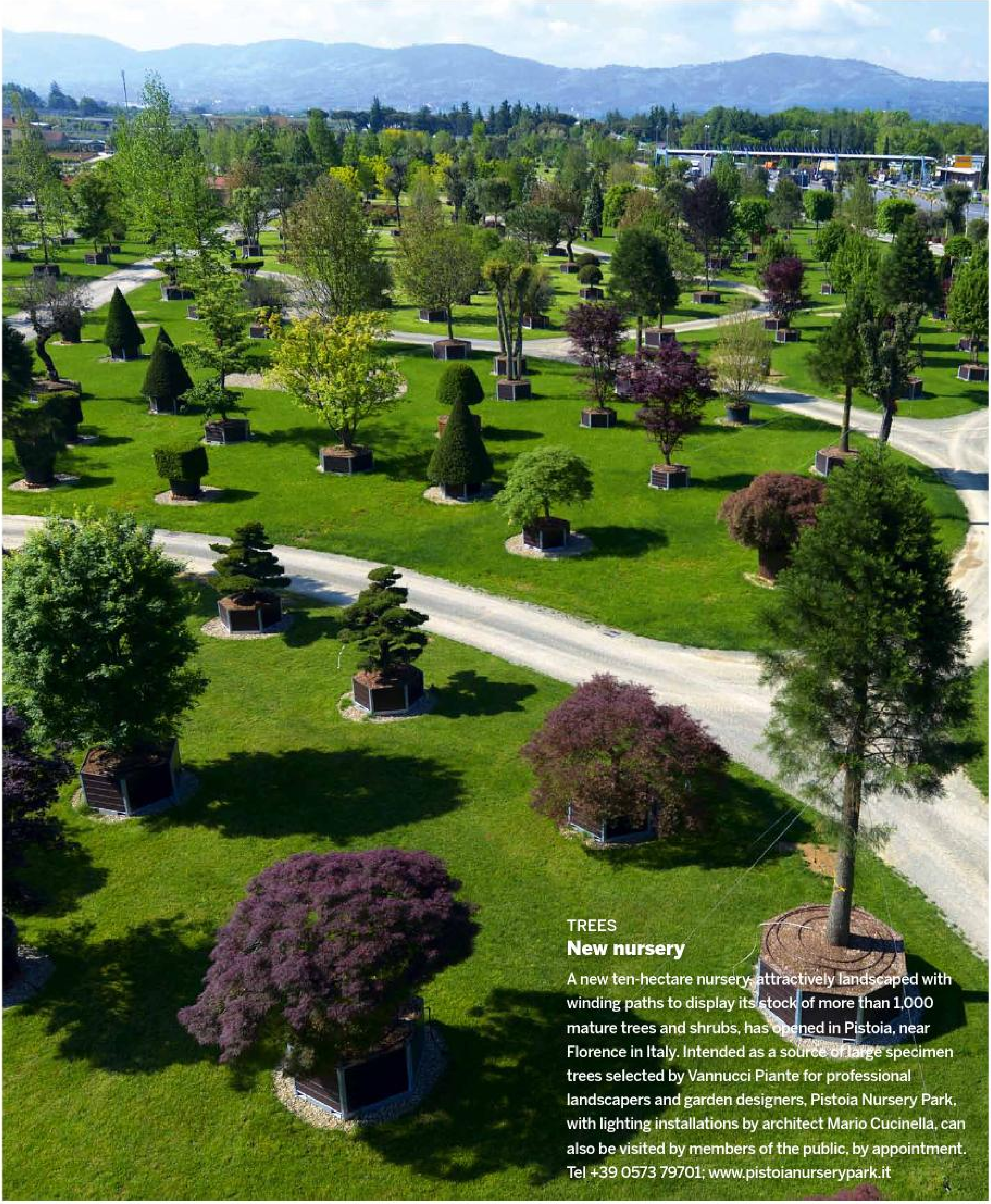


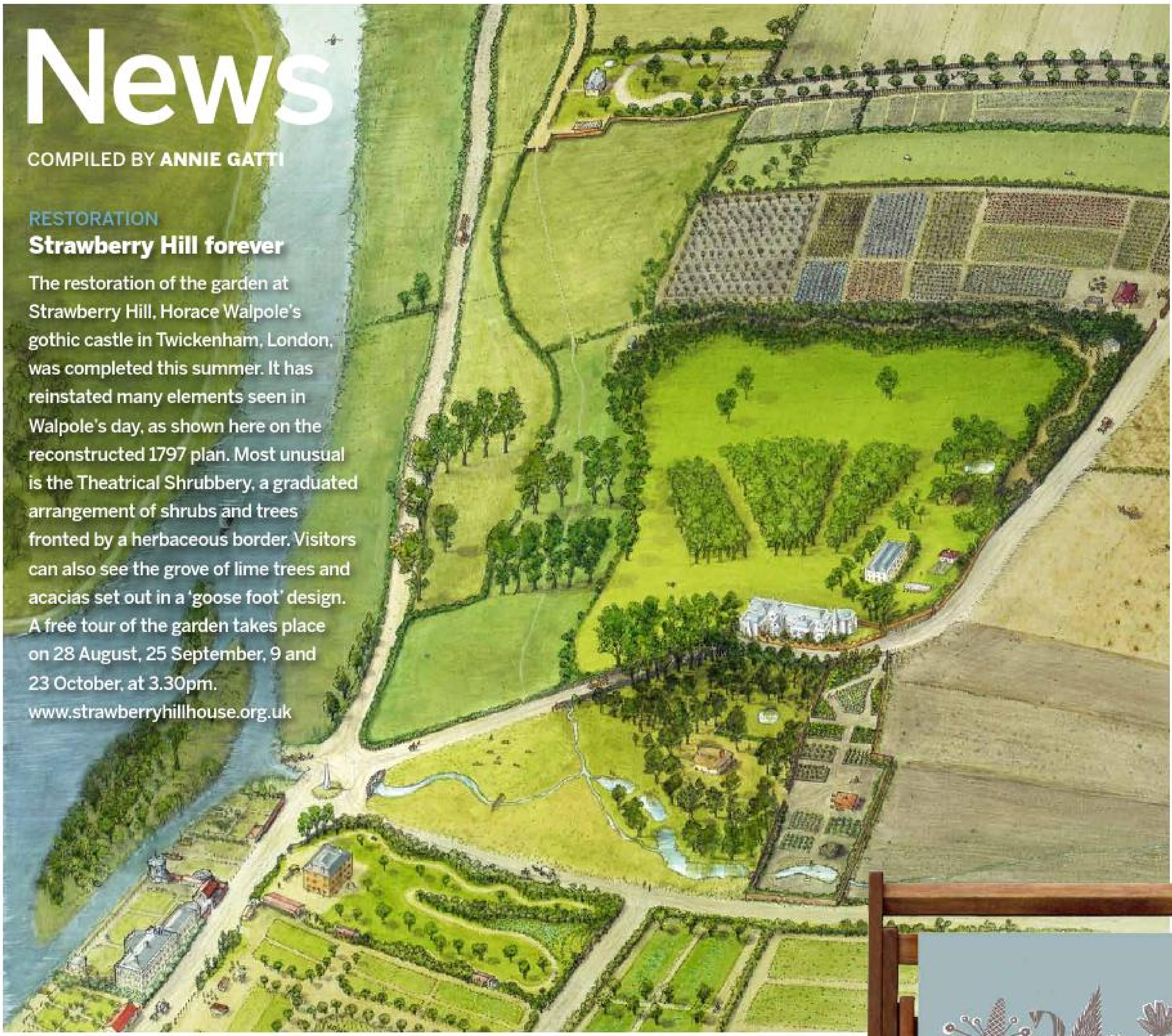
TREES

New nursery

A new ten-hectare nursery, attractively landscaped with winding paths to display its stock of more than 1,000 mature trees and shrubs, has opened in Pistoia, near Florence in Italy. Intended as a source of large specimen trees selected by Vannucci Piante for professional landscapers and garden designers, Pistoia Nursery Park, with lighting installations by architect Mario Cucinella, can also be visited by members of the public, by appointment. Tel +39 0573 79701; www.pistoianurserypark.it

News

COMPILED BY **ANNIE GATTI**



RESTORATION

Strawberry Hill forever

The restoration of the garden at Strawberry Hill, Horace Walpole's gothic castle in Twickenham, London, was completed this summer. It has reinstated many elements seen in Walpole's day, as shown here on the reconstructed 1797 plan. Most unusual is the Theatrical Shrubbery, a graduated arrangement of shrubs and trees fronted by a herbaceous border. Visitors can also see the grove of lime trees and acacias set out in a 'goose foot' design. A free tour of the garden takes place on 28 August, 25 September, 9 and 23 October, at 3.30pm. www.strawberryhillhouse.org.uk

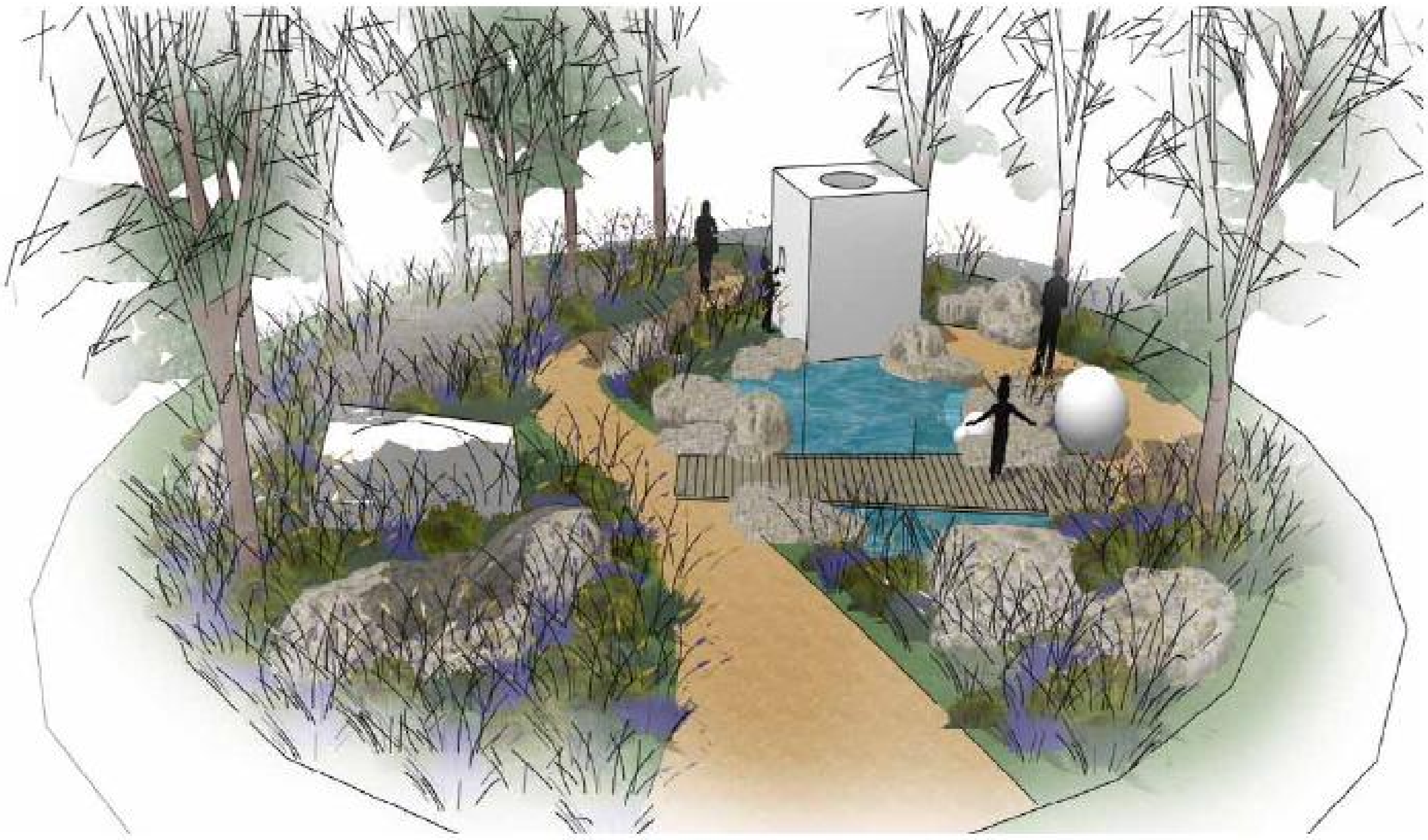
RECYCLING

Show gardens live on

The Remix Garden is a fresh approach to recycling show gardens. Using materials from the Cloudy Bay garden in the Fresh category at Chelsea this year, four installations will be created at the Oxo Tower Wharf Courtyard, London. The designers are Anoushka Feiler, Daniel Lobb, Matthew Childs and Jon Sims. The remaining materials will be used by the Bankside Open Spaces Trust. For more, visit www.cityscapes.org.uk

GRAND DESIGNS Chris Beardshaw, Angie Lewin and Maggi Hambling are among 16 celebrities who have created designs on the theme of Nature's Grand Designs for the Deckchair Dreams collection, a project run by the Royal Parks Foundation. Visit www.deckchairdreams.org

NEW SHOW The inaugural Australian Garden Show Sydney takes place at Centennial Park next month. There will be display gardens, floral pavilion, children's potting tent and talks from garden design experts including Australia's Jim Fogarty and Andrew Fisher Tomlin from the UK. Andrew is also creating a display garden with fellow British designer Tom Harfleet. 5-8 September; tickets at www.australiangarden showsydney.com.au



GREENHOUSE

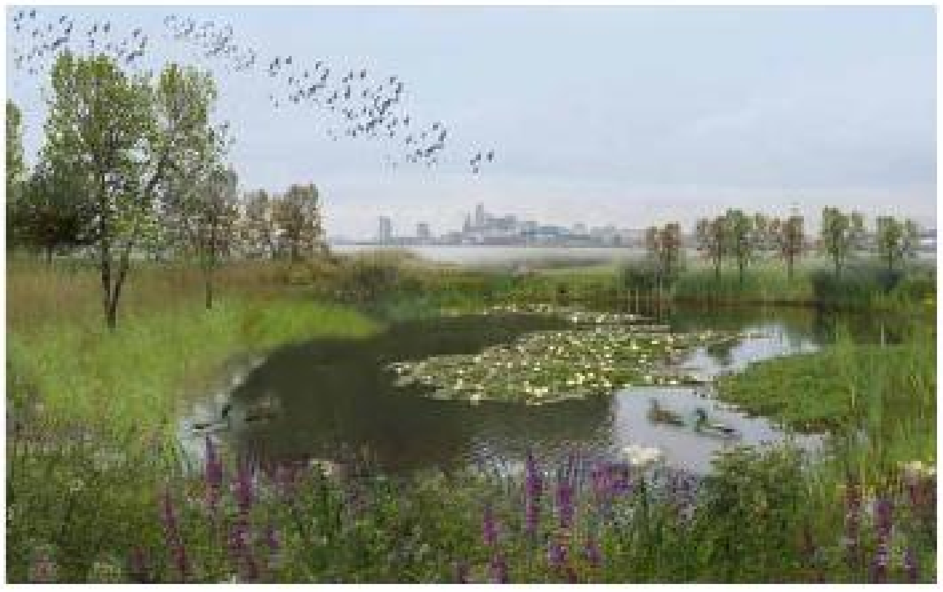
One for the kids

The Budding Gardeners Greenhouse from Gabriel Ash is just the right size to appeal to young gardeners wanting to have a go at raising their own plants. Made from sturdy Western Red Cedar, this neat glasshouse is built to last and at over 2m at its apex, it's perfect for adults too – they'll just need to duck to enter through the 1.47m-high sliding doors. 1.8m wide and 1.2m deep, it's available at the introductory price of £995, supply only. Tel 0845 434 8897; www.gabrielash.com

PARK DESIGN

Wirral redevelopment

Work has started on a £2.3m scheme to create a new park on a former landfill site in the Wirral. The 28-hectare Port Sunlight River Park, designed by landscape architects Gillespies, will incorporate wildlife habitats including a wetland area and a wildflower walk and will open up access to the coast. It will offer stunning views, from the site's 37m-high mound, over the Mersey estuary.



GILLESPIES

Notebook

- **The Designing for Community Space award** is a new category in the Society of Garden Designers Awards and it's open to non-members. The spaces may be temporary or permanent. Closing date 12 August, www.sgdawards.com
- **A day looking at plants and plant combinations at Beth Chatto Gardens** hosted by David Ward, takes place on 14 August. On 12 September David leads a half-day workshop on creating a gravel garden. Both events should be booked in advance. Tel 01206 822007; www.bethchatto.co.uk
- **See the new rose garden at Dunham Massey** in Cheshire, designed by head gardener Damian Harris and planted with 1,600 roses around a central rotunda. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dunham-massey
- **More than 60 sculptures by artists** from the South East create a winding trail through RHS Wisley Garden from 24 August to 29 September. All works are for sale.
- **Book now for a workshop day at RSPB Wildlife Garden** at Flatford Mill, Suffolk, which shows how to plan and make a wildlife-friendly garden. 14 September, 10am-4pm. Tel 01206 391153, www.rspb.org.uk

Linking the garden with the landscape

You don't always have to search far and wide for design inspiration. Sometimes it's right on the other side of your garden fence

WORDS ANNIE GUILFOYLE

Annie Guilfoyle is Director of Garden Design at KLC School of Design. She is also Garden Course Coordinator at West Dean College and runs her own garden design studio.

Last month I wrote about linking the house and garden. Now I am leaping the boundary to focus on the connection between the garden and the greater landscape. Nothing new about this – in the 18th century in his Epistle to Lord Burlington, essayist and poet Alexander Pope referred to the Roman ideology of consulting the 'genius of the place'. The Romans believed that every location had its own guardian spirit and that it should be respected. The modern interpretation of *genius loci* is about recognising the distinctiveness of the place and giving it careful consideration before implementing a new design. Maybe this all sounds rather heavy duty, but if you do look beyond the garden wall and consider how the site relates to the surrounding landscape, it can help with the design process.

Designers talk of 'borrowing the landscape', which simply means opening up vistas from a garden, allowing you to appreciate distant views. A niche cut into a hedge or a pair of trees planted apart, are simple ways of framing a view and drawing the eye outward. The ha-ha, which is basically a hidden ditch, is probably the most familiar device for seamlessly connecting the garden to the landscape.

Take your cue

Identifying trees and shrubs that are growing in neighbouring gardens or on surrounding land should give you an indication of the plants that will thrive in your garden. By selecting similar species and positioning them close to the garden perimeter it will help to 'blur' the boundaries; creating a connection to the outside and making the garden appear larger. The geographical location of the garden can aid with the plant selection. For example, in a coastal situation *Hippophae rhamnoides* (sea buckthorn) or *Crataegus monogyna* (hawthorn) will survive the exposed conditions and connect to the landscape.

Observe the local topography and see if this can be reflected in some way. The lines of distant hills could be mirrored by a cloud-pruned hedge, or plant swathes of grasses that will gently undulate in the breeze to resemble the contours of the land.

Those who live in an urban environment may be muttering about the lack of sweeping vistas. However it is still possible to create a connection. Local materials and building styles may be reflected in the design of the hard landscaping. Formal hedging and geometric topiary can be clipped in an innovative way to echo the outlines of the cityscape. Consider the High Line in Manhattan, a fabulous example of framing city views and relating the park to the industrial heritage of a site. Remember, before you redesign your garden take time to look over the fence and consult your genius!

NEXT MONTH Creating privacy in the garden

1 Blurring the boundaries

Nestled beside the village of Buckland Monachorum, The Garden House in Devon has the most magnificent views of Dartmoor. It is almost impossible to see where the garden ends and the landscape begins. The garden feels much larger than it really is and has a very strong sense of place.

1

THE GARDEN HOUSE

2 Similar contours

The undulating lines of a distant landscape can be mirrored by skilfully pruning the boundary hedge, echoing the sinuous contours. You can choose to prune the hedge very lightly, making it appear more naturalistic, or if you accentuate the pruning it becomes more stylised.

3 Coastal connection

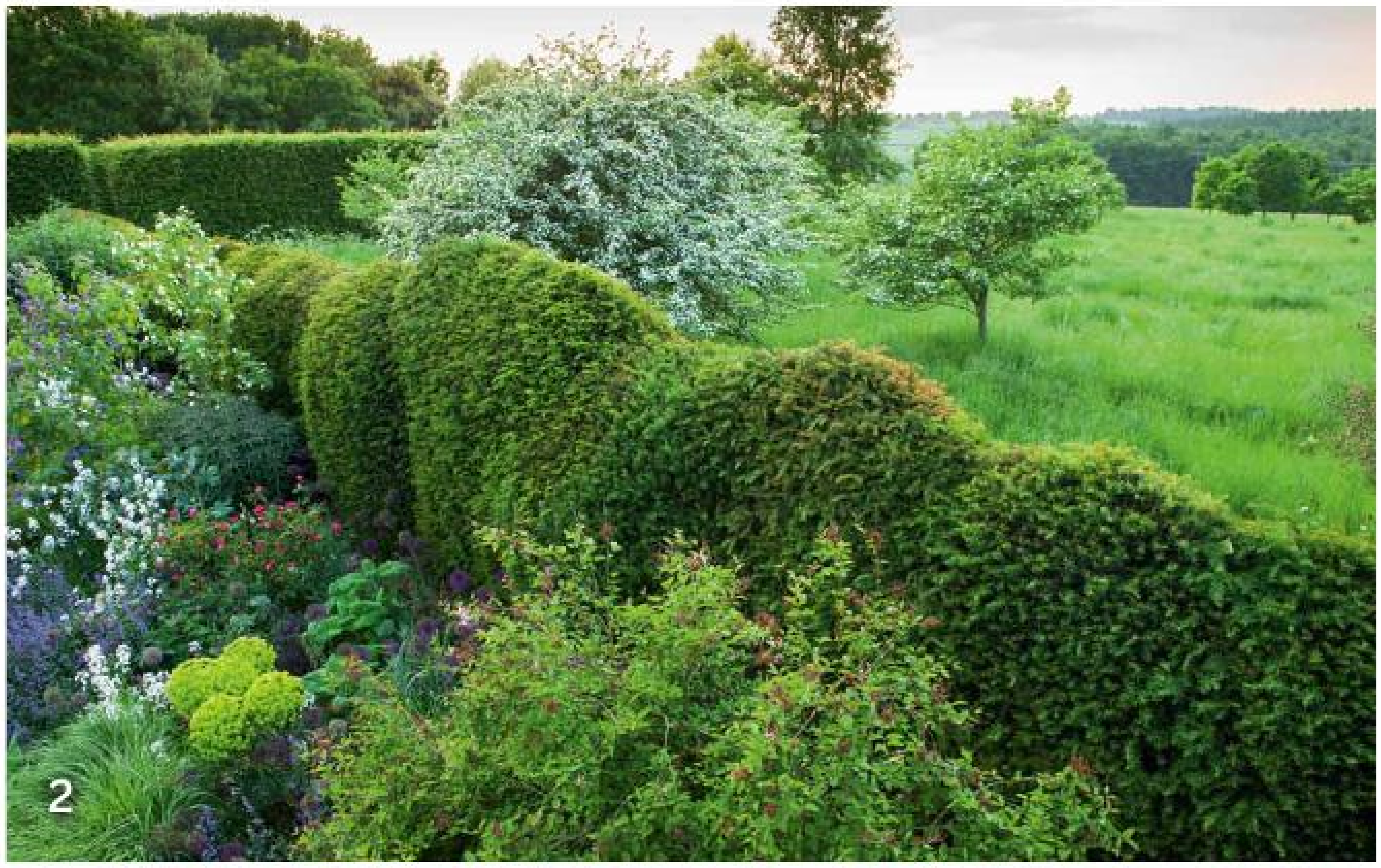
In this charming Cornish garden carefully placed rocks and large pieces of driftwood are arranged along the boundary, linking it with the coastal scene beyond. However, you need to strike a delicate balance to ensure that you don't overdo the styling and avoid creating a pastiche.

4 Local materials

If possible try to use local materials in the construction of the garden. Locally sourced stone will not only blend well into the landscape but it may also connect with the neighbouring buildings and gardens. To strengthen this link with the landscape, research local building methods and traditions.

5 Open invitation

A gate offers a physical link between the garden and the landscape. It provides a focal point and leads the eye outward, beyond the boundaries. An open gate represents an invitation, making it hard to resist walking through to discover what is on the other side.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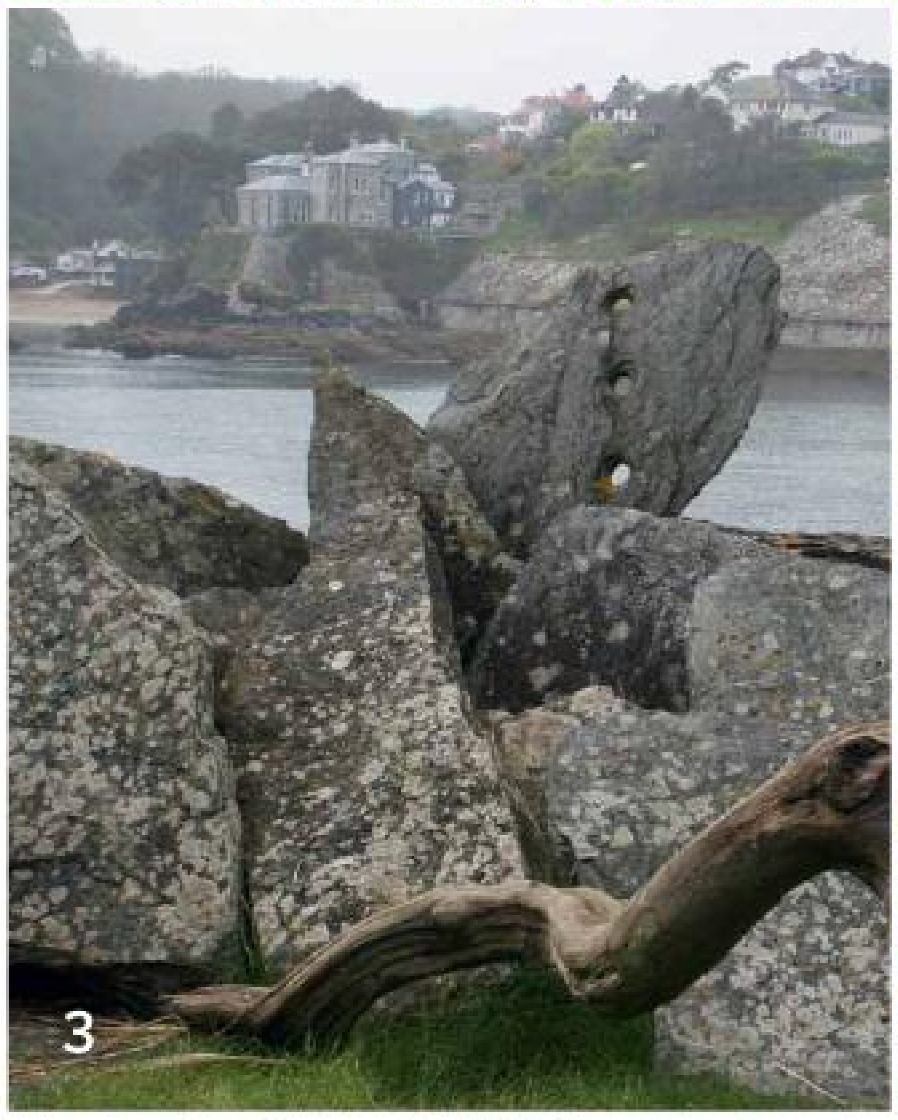
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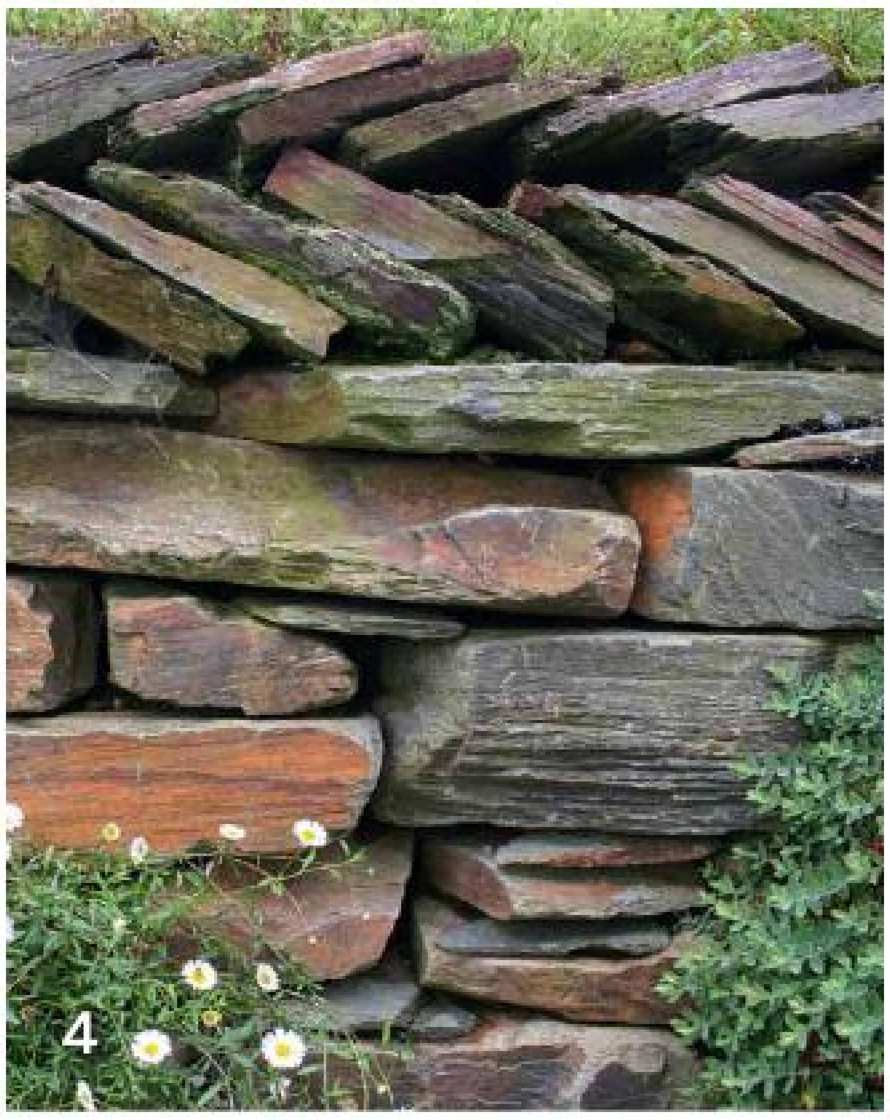
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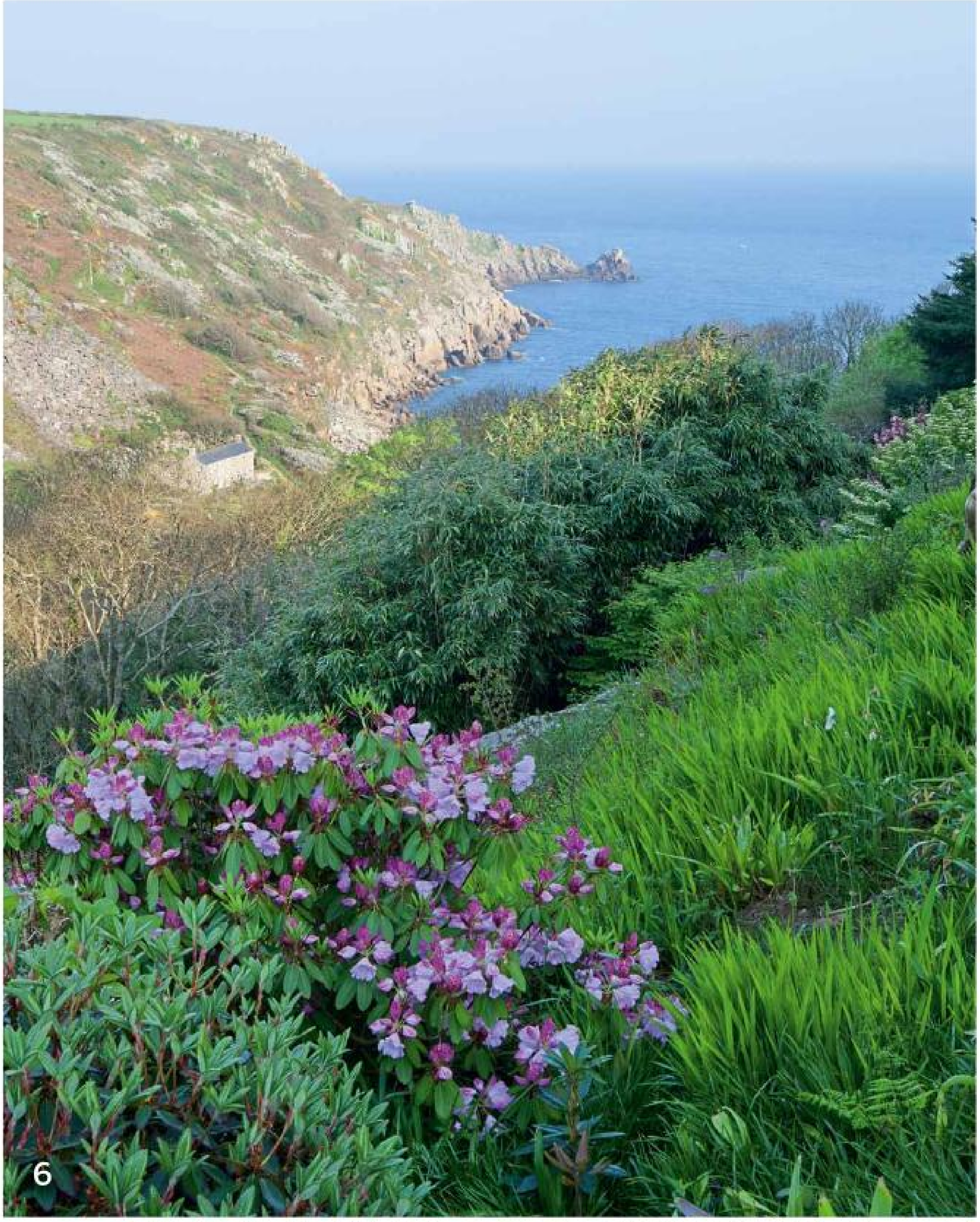
2 MARIANNE MAJERUS DESIGN TOM STUART-SMITH 3& 4 ANNIE GUILFOYLE 5 MARCUS HARPUR / GAP PHOTOS



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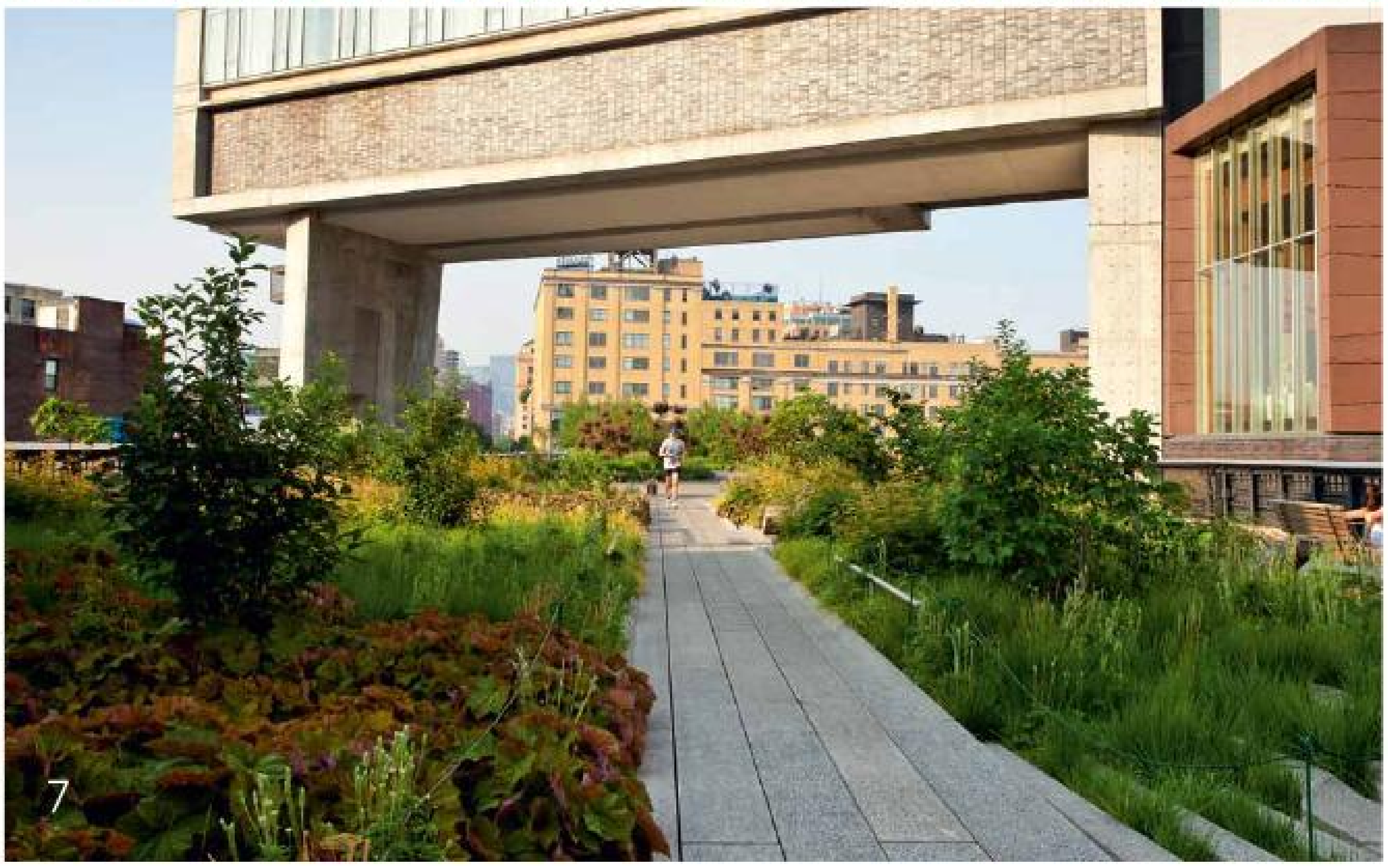

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6 MARIANNE MAJERUS, 7 CLARE TAKACS

6 Don't compete

When the surrounding landscape is this spectacular, it would be foolish to try and compete with it. Here the gentle, naturalistic planting merges effortlessly into the wilder Cornish countryside. Selecting the appropriate plants to suit the location is so important when creating a garden that sits comfortably in the landscape.

7 Urban framing

The High Line in Manhattan is one of the most exciting urban parks to have been created in recent years. At various points there are promontories where you can sit and view the streets below. A large hotel straddles this section of the park, creating a dramatic link with the cityscape.

Useful resources

The Garden House
www.thegardenhouse.org.uk
The High Line
www.thehighline.org

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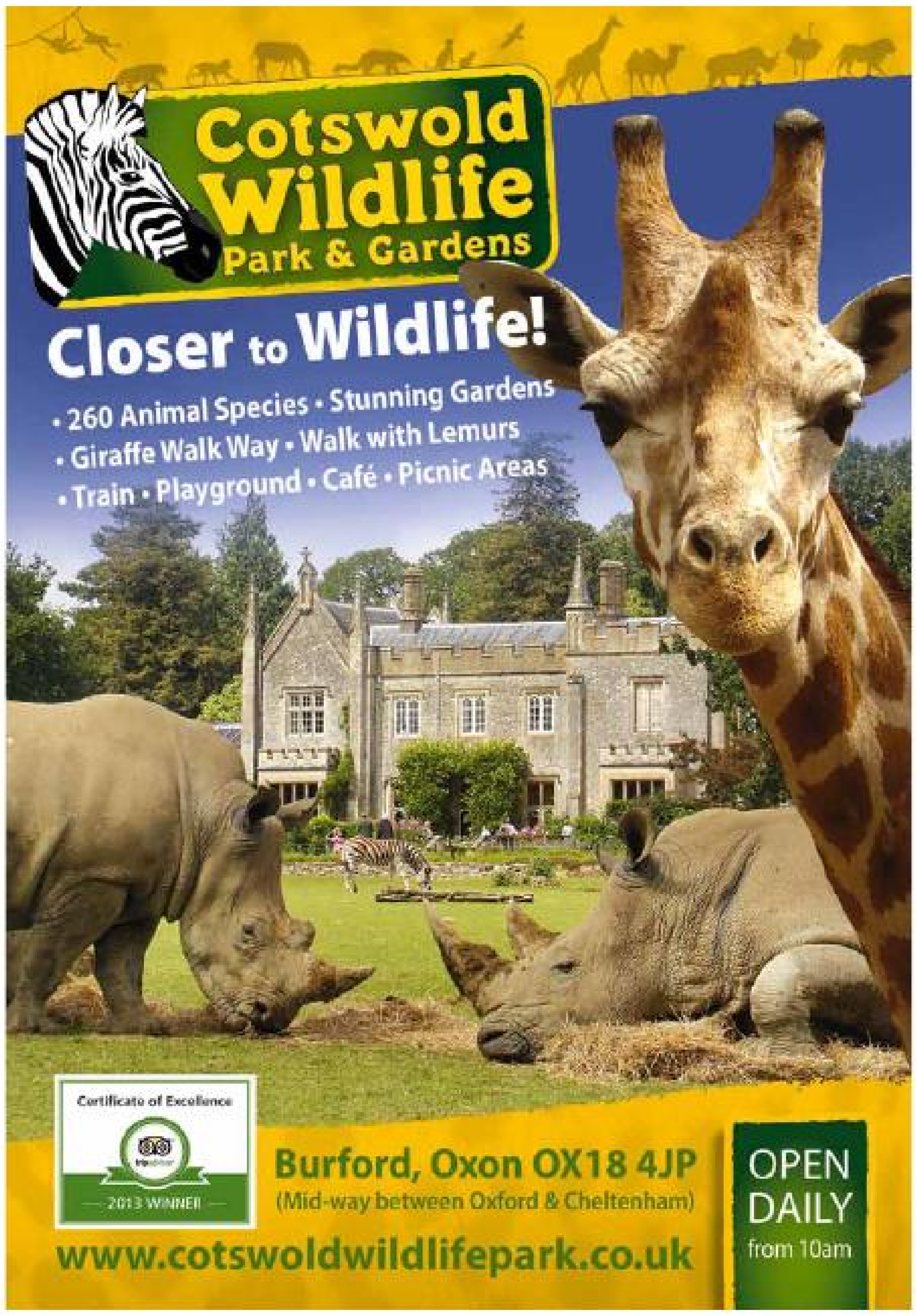
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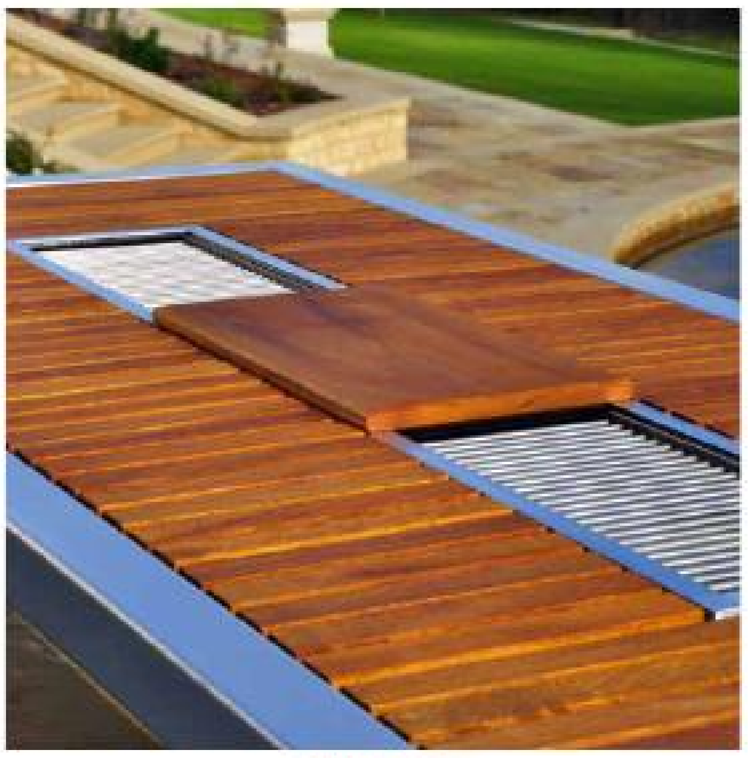

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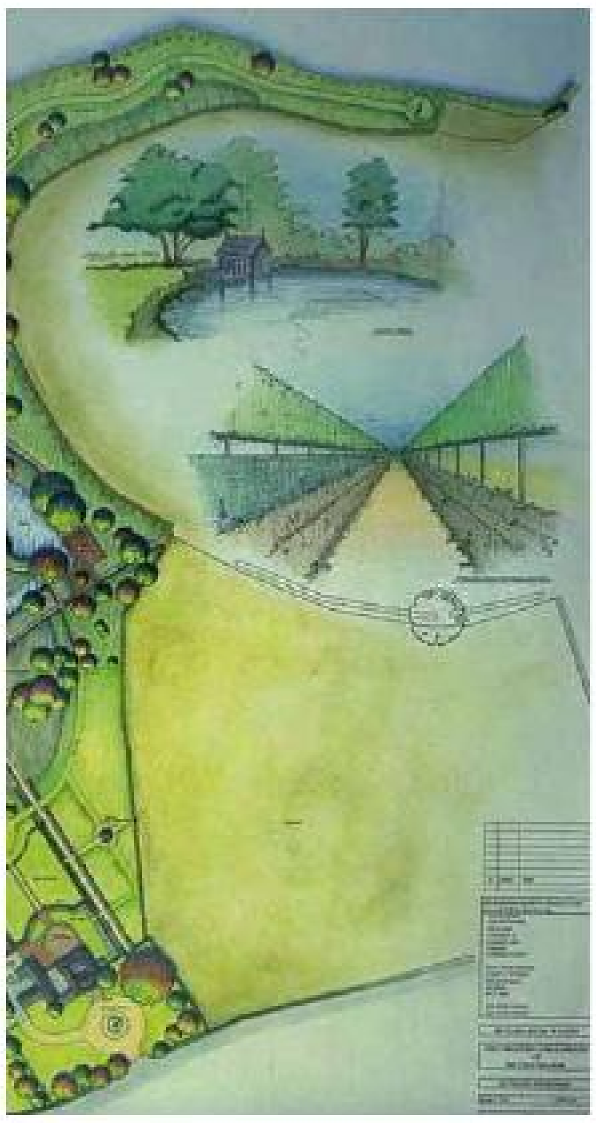

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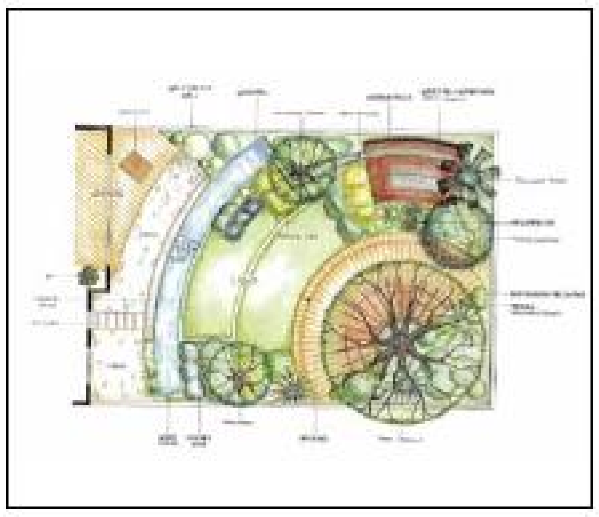

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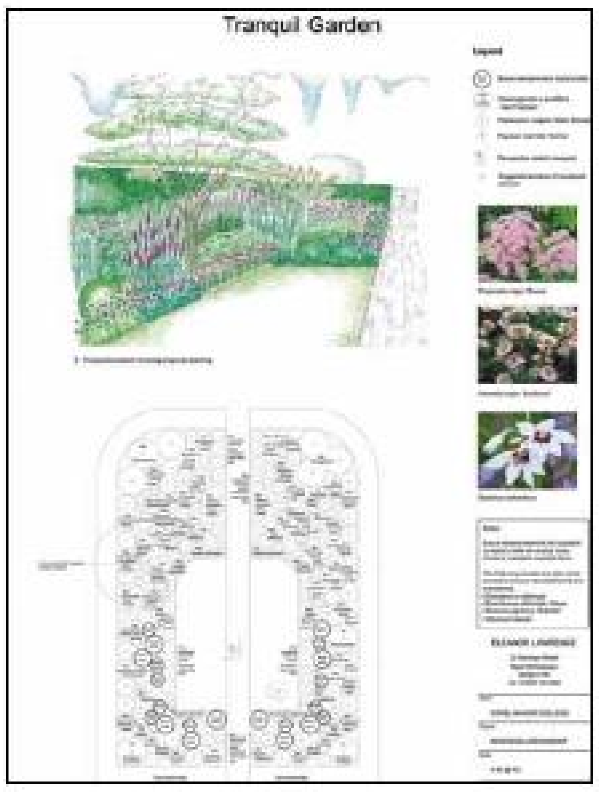

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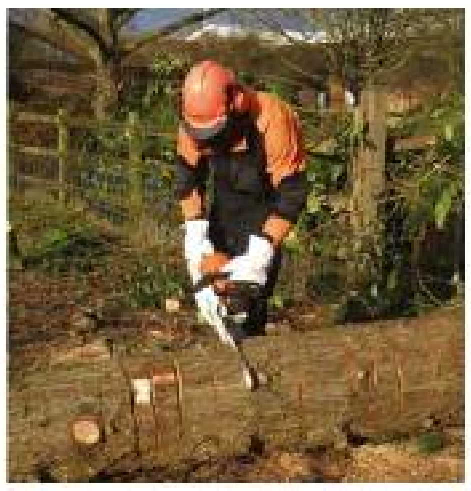

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EMAIL **blithfieldwillowcrafts@gmail.com**
WEBSITE **www.blithfieldwillowcrafts.co.uk**

Downtools

Book reviews, reader letters, and crossword

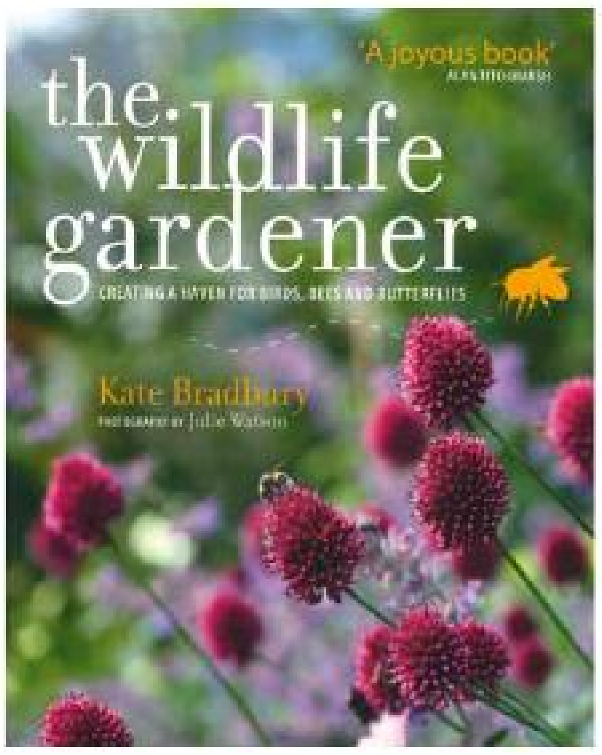
Kate Bradbury's new book, reviewed over the page, helps us to become more aware as wildlife gardeners.

THE WILDLIFE GARDENER BY KATE BRADBURY. PUBLISHED BY KYLE BOOKS. £14.99. PHOTOGRAPHY: JULIE WATSON

Book reviews

THE WILDLIFE GARDENER

by Kate Bradbury
Kyle Books, £16.99
ISBN 978-0857831576


'A joyous book'
the wildlife gardener
CREATING A HAVEN FOR BIRDS, BEES AND BUTTERFLIES
Kate Bradbury
PHOTOGRAPHY BY Julie Watson

To be instructive and enjoyable, we ask of any practical book that its author be immersed passionately in its subject matter. This leaps out of every page of Kate Bradbury's book. Her outlook may at times challenge the practice of those of us who garden primarily with the purpose of growing plants well; nevertheless it is enthusiasm that carries this book forward rather than self-righteousness.

At 135 pages, the book is an easy read and full of punchy, practical tips for improving the wildlife interest in even the smallest of gardens. However, intimate and vital connections between habitat, plants, invertebrates, birds and mammals keep cropping up, so that the reader, almost by stealth, will gain an insight into the study of ecology and an understanding of wider environmental concerns. Huge as these topics are, it is the author's belief that domestic gardens and the actions of individuals have an important part to play. Her energetic, practical approach lends a persuasive weight to this argument.

The first half of the book includes chapters on shelter, food, water and use of pesticides.

Planting for pollinators – one of the steps that Kate's book encourages.

THE WILDLIFE GARDENER BY KATE BRADBURY PUBLISHED BY KYLE BOOKS, £14.99. PHOTOGRAPHY: JULIE WATSON

Embedded in these chapters are step-by-step instructions for ten 'projects' such as making a hedgehog box, a solitary bee 'hotel', or a green roof. The second half of the book comprises a 'mini field guide' with illustrations and discussion of the more common and notable garden visitors. Each entry concludes with tips on attracting them to your garden.

Throughout, Kate Bradbury is refreshingly frank in acknowledging the tensions that can arise between gardening for wildlife and gardening for aesthetic effect or for the table. She is happy to recognise that conflicts of interest do occur and to offer choice to the reader. Usually, the less welcome habits of wild visitors are presented conscientiously, with the occasional lapse – what garden won't suffer at the hands of voles, for instance? It may take a considerable adjustment for many of us to follow all of her suggestions, but the book tends to encourage consideration on a case-by-case basis rather than being prescriptive.

All in all, a thoughtful and invigorating read.

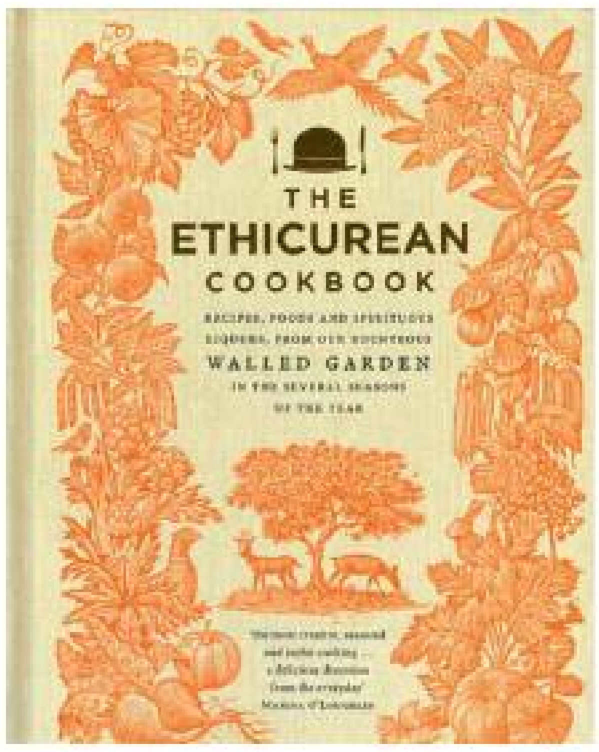
Rory Dusoir is a Kew-trained gardener and writer

book offer

RRP £16.99. **Reader offer price £15.29** including p&p.

THE ETHICUREAN COOKBOOK

by The Ethicurean
Ebury Press, £25
ISBN 978-0091949921



It's a fantastic time to be a foodie in the UK. Farmers' markets, artisan producers and street food have created an incredible buzz about good food. It is now widely recognised by home cooks and restaurants alike that provenance, seasonality and freshness of ingredients are vital if you want the best flavours. Ethicurean, an award-winning restaurant and kitchen garden just south of Bristol have built up a reputation for tasty, inspiring food. Run by a team of four, their ethos of seasonality and local sourcing is captured perfectly in their first cookbook.

The book takes us through a year at Barley wood, the productive walled garden, orchards and Victorian glasshouse where Ethicurean is based. Gardener Mark grows fruit, vegetables and herbs and the chefs seek out other ingredients from small scale producers in the area, whether it's goat's meat, salt-marsh lamb or local cheeses.

Jason Ingram's photography is beautiful. Images of food, the garden, the team and celebrations such as the wassail all combine to give a sense of this special place. The food looks and reads as delicious, but with techniques such as smoking and some relatively difficult to get hold of ingredients this book is probably best suited to the more adventurous or confident cook. That said, the book does feature an extensive suppliers list, which should help with sourcing.

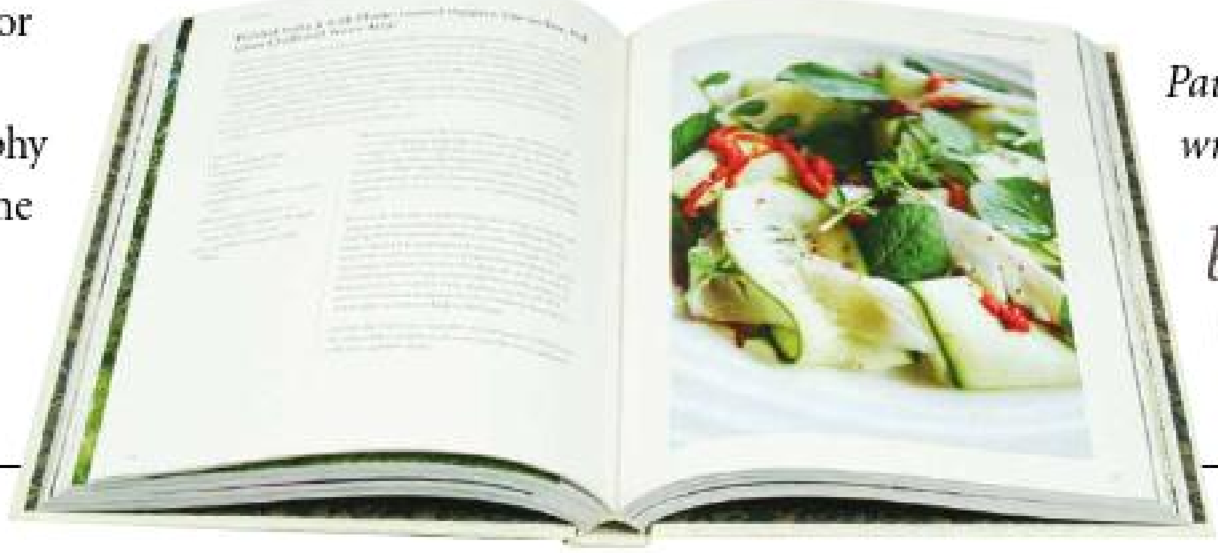
Throughout there are hints and tips that will appeal to gardeners, from extolling the virtues of vegetable clamps and pickling nasturtium seeds to recipes such as roast courgette soup. Whether it's encouraging an interest in long-forgotten foods such as quince or encouraging a spot of foraging, this book is a wonderful celebration of the best of British food and produce.

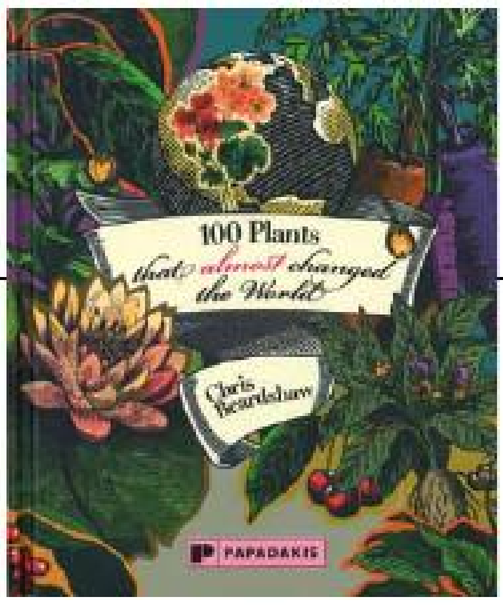
The book covers drink too, from the cider and apple juice made from their orchard to a selection of tempting cocktails. Even if you don't intend to whip up some of the suggestions, they make for fascinating reading. In a crowded market of food books this has a refreshing feel. Any foodie worth their sea salt should have a copy.

Louise Curley is the voice behind the Wellywoman garden blog

book offer

RRP £25. **Reader offer price £22.50** including p&p.





100 PLANTS THAT ALMOST CHANGED THE WORLD

by Chris Beardshaw
Papadakis, £12.99
ISBN 978-1906506193

Chris Beardshaw is something of a horticultural all-rounder: award-winning designer; broadcaster and columnist; passionate educationalist and consummate plantsman.

In this attractive little book he brings together what he describes as an 'arbitrary and slightly irreverent collection of tales and facts that amuse and inspire' him. From 'The Truth about Mandrake' to 'Fungus and the French Revolution', his fact-finding has been gathered from history, folklore and science, exploring some of the fascinating and little-known stories about the plants that surround us.

At first glance, this book feels like a drawstring bag full of miscellaneous facts. But despite its apparent lack of direction it makes engaging reading. There are plenty of 'Well I never knew that' moments, from the fact that a mother-in-law's tongue can neutralise over 107 pollutants to the discovery that dahlias were once grown by the Spanish as a potential food source.

Designer Shirlynn Chui-Jacobs' witty, contemporary and colourful illustrations go a long way to making the book an enticing read.

Paula McWaters is a gardening writer and editor

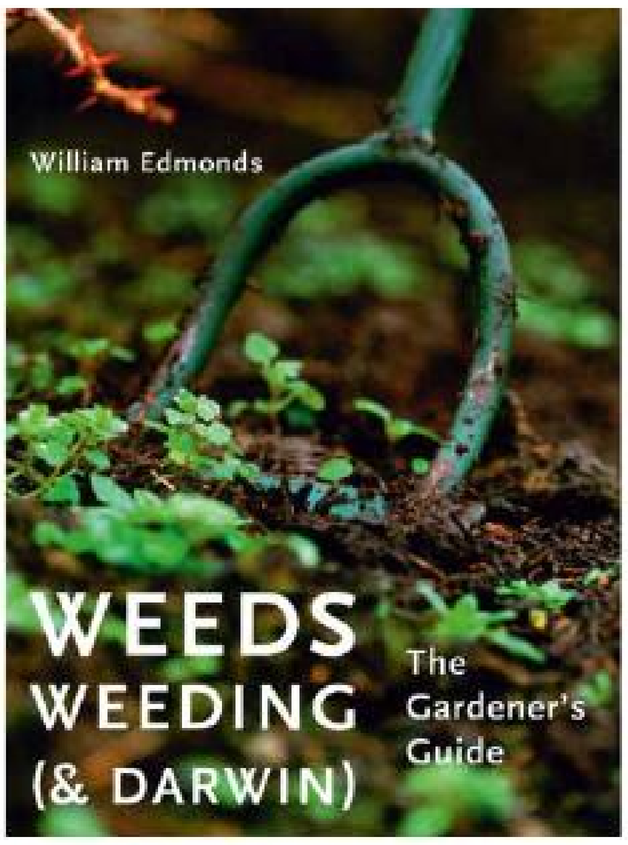
book offer

RRP £12.99. **Reader offer price £11.99** including p&p.

Book reviews

WEEDS, WEEDING (& DARWIN)

by William Edmonds
Frances Lincoln, £20
ISBN 978-0711233652



My heart sank when I first set eyes on this. The cover heralded an erudite and comprehensive guide, perhaps imported from the USA that looked set to be as dull as it was worthy.

Well, I was wrong. This is a sporadically rib-tickling page turner full of fascinating information. With a more engaging cover design it would absolutely fly off the shelves.

Edmonds is a professional gardener and former teacher whose enthusiasm for his subject is infectious. 'The most stunning breakthrough in plant evolution was the arrival of angiosperms, the flowering plants… around 140 million years ago', he writes, and you find yourself nodding in agreement.

Taking Sun Tzu's exhortation to 'know your enemy' as his starting point, and the observations of Charles Darwin as a guiding light, Edmonds focuses on 100 weeds to know and, crucially, what to do about them. These are ordered according to the 'Tree of Plant Evolution' produced by scientists at Kew, harnessing advances in DNA analysis to group the offenders under headings from Basal Angiosperms to Core Eudicots. Clearly you don't need to know that duckweed belongs to the former group and *Rhododendron ponticum* falls into the latter category in order to control them, but it is supremely satisfying to call them something other than a blessed nuisance.

Each weed is illustrated and named in Latin, to rule out any confusion, then brought into three-dimensional relief with a series of observations and anecdotes that are often amusing and always fascinating. Finally, he offers advice on what to do about each culprit.

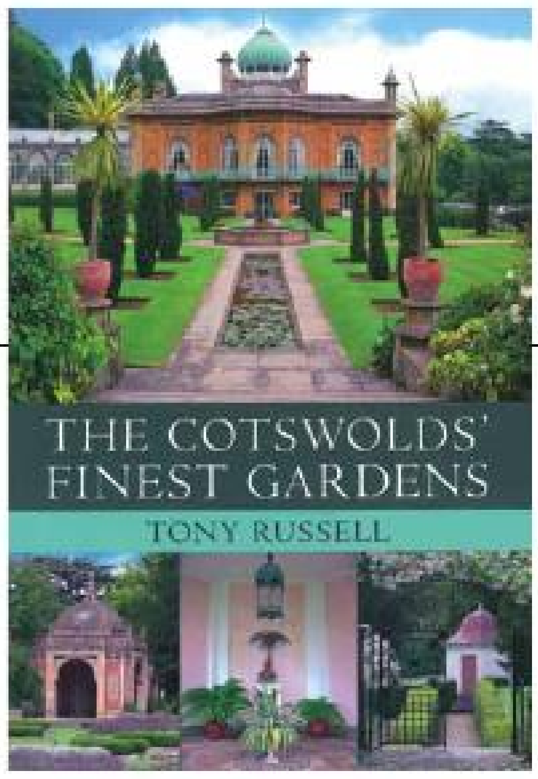
Will you feel better about finding horsetail in your garden when you learn that it holds traces of gold, cadmium and zinc? Did you realise that Japanese knotweed has claims to be the largest single female in the world? And how soon can you pass on the fact that taraxacology is the study of dandelions, as pursued by 'an international coterie of dandelion geeks'. Buy this book and not only will your weed control techniques improve, but your dinner party conversation will veer off into hitherto uncharted territory.

Jodie Jones is a freelance writer specialising in gardens

book offer

RRP £20. **Reader offer price £18** including p&p.

Planning your cutting garden



THE COTSWOLDS' FINEST GARDENS

by Tony Russell
Amberley Publishing, £15.99
ISBN 978-1445614724

England's gardening heartland? A controversial thing to say, but over the course of the 20th century, gardeners in the Cotswolds played a major role in creating that particular model of garden making – firm structures framing loose planting – which has become quintessentially English. So, it is good to have such a well-illustrated guide to the gardens of the area, from someone who knows it intimately and writes with knowledge and enthusiasm.

The one thing we're lacking is a sense of context. The visitor might ask why Cotswold gardens are special – is it simply because they happen to occur in a particular triangle of much-visited country? That the area's gardens are at root, the result of a loosely connected group of people, including many 'Henry James Americans', is one of the most fascinating and romantic stories in British garden history. The area's climate and geology has had a defining impact too, and is the kind of thing visiting gardeners need to know about.

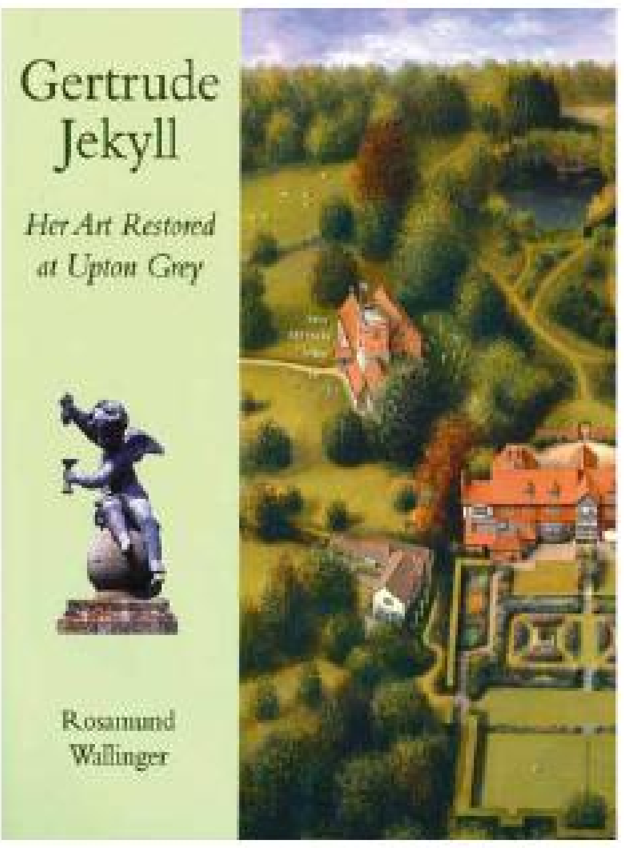
Noël Kingsbury is a gardens author and plantsman

book offer

RRP £15.99. **Reader offer price £14.50** including p&p.

GERTRUDE JEKYLL: HER ART RESTORED AT UPTON GREY

by Rosamund Wallinger
Garden Art Press, £29.95
ISBN 978-1870673808



When, in 1908, Charles Holne, one of the movers and shakers in the Arts and Crafts Movement, wanted a new garden, he turned to the leading designer of the day: Gertrude Jekyll. Over two years, she drew up detailed plans for the five-acre plot, for a formal garden and a wild garden.

In 1984, Rosamund Wallinger arrived at Upton Grey. By now, little remained of Jekyll's scheme. Undaunted, or perhaps unhampered, by her lack of horticultural knowledge, Wallinger set about restoring it, repairing the hard landscaping, tracking down Jekyll's plans, and recreating, with exactitude, her original planting.

This book is first and foremost a work of scholarship – recording, with exemplary thoroughness and in precise detail, the fruits of 30 years of patient endeavour at Upton Grey. Its value will be greatest for serious students of garden design and, in particular, planting design. Viewing Jekyll's spidery plans alongside photographs of the finished borders and the individual plants that make them up, is both illuminating and strangely moving. But this book also reminds us that Jekyll was so much more than the arch-colourist celebrated today: a pioneer of Mediterranean planting; an innovator in the wild as in the formal garden; and a superb writer – the quotations are beautifully chosen, and always revealing.

Readers accustomed to the sumptuous visuals of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED may find the photography a little flat, but photographer Dick Longfield's ambition has been not to make us swoon, but to document, clearly and faithfully, what is there – and in particular to trace Jekyll's techniques in successional planting.

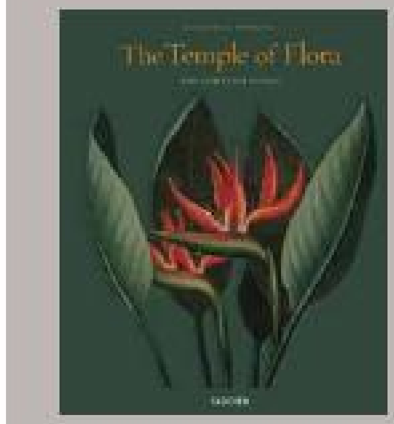
Most interesting are Wallinger's sharp observations on 'the challenges as well as the virtues of a hundred-year-old garden'. The old cultivars she has tracked down with such assiduity are often less good than new ones, invariably harder to manage, sometimes, as with Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed, horticultural pariahs today. Her failures and frustrations are documented as meticulously as the rewards. But in this book, as in her garden, Wallinger clearly takes immense joy in creating 'a testament to Gertrude Jekyll's knowledge, understanding of nature, and to her art.'

Ambra Edwards is a writer specialising in gardens

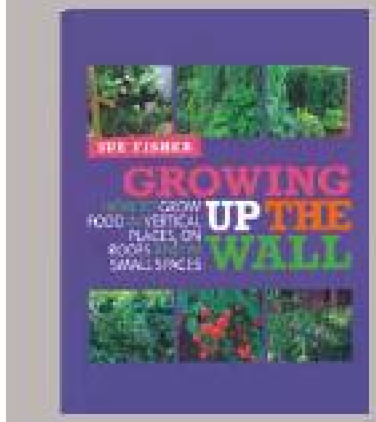
book offer

RRP £29.95. **Reader offer price £27.95** including p&p.

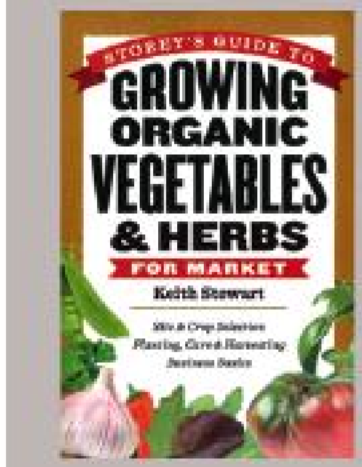
Other recently released books for gardeners



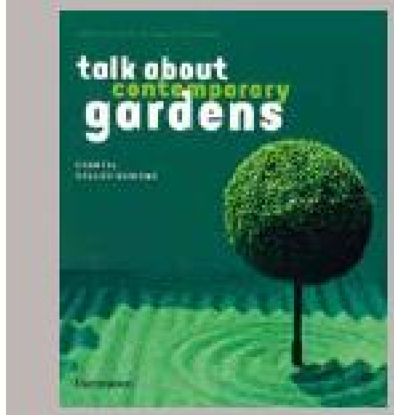
THE TEMPLE OF FLORA
by Robert John Thornton
Taschen, £34.99
ISBN 978-3836536332
A reprint of the original 1799 classic, featuring sections on the origin of the work and the life of its author.



GROWING UP THE WALL
by Sue Fisher
Green Books, £9.95
ISBN 978-0857841094
How to transform previously plant-free zones into thriving, beneficial and utterly beautiful food-growing areas.



GROWING ORGANIC VEGETABLES AND HERBS FOR MARKET
by Keith Stewart
Storey Publishing, £17.99
ISBN 978-1603425711
Insights into growing and marketing produce.



TALK ABOUT CONTEMPORARY GARDENS
by Chantal Colleu-Dumond
Flammarion, £18.95
ISBN 978-2080201430
From new innovations to notable designers and their signature creations.

book offer details

Most featured books are available to readers at special rates. For details of book offers, arranged in association with EFC Bookshop, call 01872 562318 or go to www.gardensillustrated.com/shop

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Reader offers

Scented pelargoniums collection

There's still time in the season to enjoy scented pelargoniums – see our plant profile on page 54 – and as summer draws to a close you can bring your plants indoors so you can enjoy them all year round. Wootten's of Wenhaston are offering a scented pelargoniums collection at a special 20% discount for GARDENS ILLUSTRATED readers.

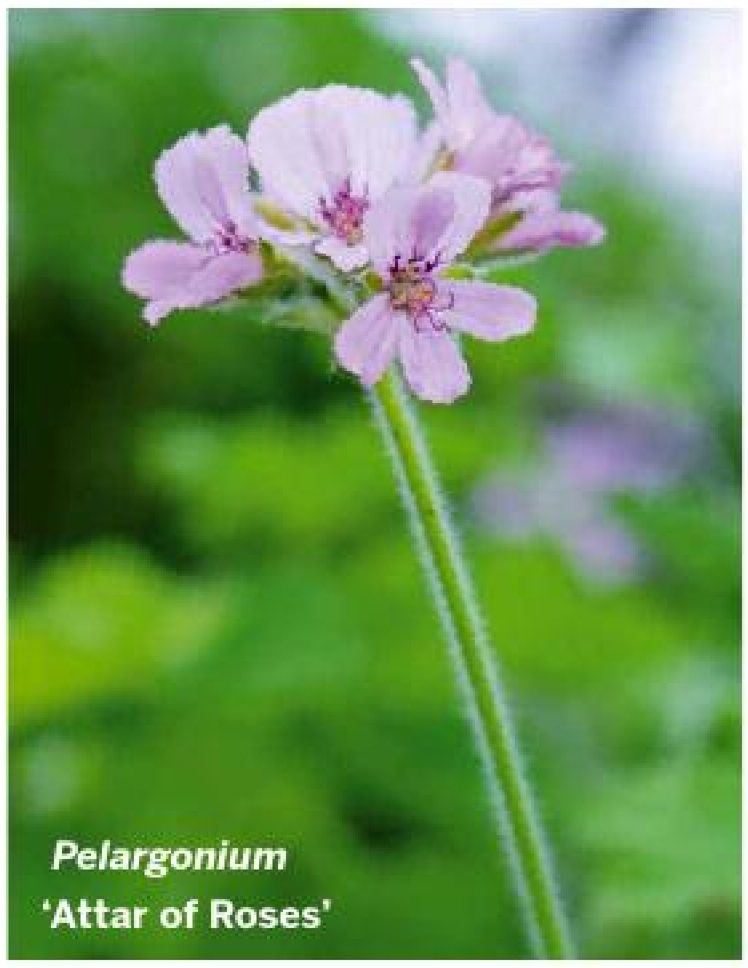
Offer

Choose from either Collection 1 or 2 – see right for your choice. Plants are supplied fully established in 9cm pots along with detailed care instructions. Prices include p&p. Plants will be sent 1st class Royal Mail.

How to order

- **By telephone** Call 01502 478258 with details of your debit or credit card.
- **Online** www.woottensplants.com and then click on the Special Offers tab.
- **By post** Please complete the coupon below and send it to:
  GARDENS ILLUSTRATED Pelargonium Offer, Woottens of Wenhaston,
  Blackheath, Wenhaston, Halesworth,
  Suffolk IP19 9HD.

Offer ends 31 August 2013. Available to UK mainland only. **Please note** Plants may be substituted if original choice unavailable. Every effort will be made to make these as similar as possible.


***Pelargonium* 'Attar of Roses'**

P. tomentosum

Collection 1

3 x scented pelargoniums:

1 x *P.* 'Attar of Roses'
1 x *P. tomentosum*
1 x *P.* 'Pink Capricorn'

£17.50 inc p&p

Offer code PEL03

Collection 2

6 x scented pelargoniums:

2 x *P.* 'Attar of Roses'
2 x *P. tomentosum*
2 x *P.* 'Pink Capricorn'

£31.00 inc p&p

Offer code PEL06

***P.* 'Pink Capricorn'**

ORDER FORM – PLEASE SEND ORDER & PAYMENT to: GARDENS ILLUSTRATED Pelargonium Offer,
Woottens of Wenhaston, Blackheath, Wenhaston, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 9HD

Collection Choice	Price	Qty	Total
Collection 1 – PEL03	£17.50 inc p&p		£
Collection 2 – PEL06	£31.00 inc p&p		£
		TOTAL £	

YOUR DETAILS

Title ______ Initial ____ Surname ____________________

Address ____________________

____

____________________ Postcode ____________________

Telephone number ____________________

PAYMENT DETAILS

CHEQUE

I enclose a cheque for £________ made payable to Wootten's of Wenhaston and with my name and address on the back.

CREDIT/DEBIT CARD

Please charge my ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Maestro

Card Number: ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐

Expiry Date: ☐☐ / ☐☐ Maestro Issue No: ☐☐

Security Number (last 3 digits on signature strip): ☐☐☐

Signature ____________________

JASON INGRAM

Gardener's Hand Care collection

As their name suggests, **Simply Roses** focus on all things roses. There is a floral design service, which uses freshly cut roses, and a planting design service that gives you options for including roses and other scented plants in your garden whatever its size – or even designing new rose planting schemes from scratch.

In addition they offer a range of rose-related products including picking baskets, arranging jugs, pruning shears, twine and snips, and hand wash or candles made with *Rosa damascena* oil.

For GARDENS ILLUSTRATED readers, Simply Roses is offering its Gardener's Hand Care collection, which includes Rose Pruning Gauntlets in nubuck with resistant cotton sleeves, and 300ml *Rosa damascena* paraben-free hand wash, packaged in an attractive hessian sack. Price £24.95 (save £4.95) plus £5.95 p&p.

£24.95
(SAVING £4.95)
+£5.95 p&p
Flowers & Gardens
Simply Roses
ROSA DAMASCENA
Gardener's Hand Wash

How to order
Go to **www.simplyroses.com/offer.htm** and complete the order details for your special Gardener's Hand Care offer.

Offer ends 31 October 2013.
Available to UK mainland only.
• **You can find out more about Simply Roses at www.simplyroses.com**

The Balcony Gardener reader discount

If you garden in a small space, you'll be interested to know that online retailer **The Balcony Gardener** has you in mind with its range of containers, furniture, tools, seeds and other products and accessories perfect for a garden with limited space. They also provide a ready made container service allowing you to choose from four different styles.

To mark our small gardens issue, the Balcony Gardener are offering readers a 10% discount across their range.

How to order
Go to www.thebalconygardener.com and make your order. To gain your discount, enter code GI2013 when prompted. Delivery is charged at the standard rate. Please see website for details.

Offer ends 31 August 2013
Available to UK mainland only.

Letters

Have your say – we'd like to hear your views, so please write to us at: GARDENS ILLUSTRATED,
9th Floor, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN, or email letters@gardensillustrated.com

Star letter

French defence

I can only echo Louisa Jones (Talking Point, issue 197) with regard to gardens in France, except to emphasise that there are many fine gardens in Normandy. Unfortunately these are frequently missed by many British visitors as they head south to Provence or the Dordogne area. Our present garden in the Orne region of Basse Normandie, based on the classic English country garden, was created by a French lady who is a very keen plantswoman. The wide range of trees, shrubs and flowers in the garden encourage a range of wildlife, insects, birds and animals, while the vegetable garden and orchard provide a range of produce. In April and May there is a wonderful display, firstly of cherry and pear blossom, followed by the apple trees, which are the basis of the perry and cider-making industry in the locality. Our French neighbours are enthusiastic gardeners, and though they have little or no knowledge of the Chelsea Flower Show, they are familiar with David Austin roses!

Roderick Urquhart, by email

HYBRIDS

Science boon

It was good to see Tom Petherick's piece about the Real Seed Catalogue in issue 199 [page 72]; they do indeed produce one of the most interesting ranges of vegetable seed around. However I must take issue with both Ben's and Tom's objections to hybrid vegetables and crops. Without hybrid and other high-yielding crops the world would have been suffering catastrophic famines from the 1960s onwards. While today's 'hi-tech' crops are produced overwhelmingly for commercial growers, there are many good spin-offs for domestic gardeners, with pest and disease resistant varieties becoming increasingly available – carrots with resistance to carrot fly being an example many of us are grateful for.

Noël Kingsbury, by email

FLOWERS

Foxglove fan

I am very pleased with a cluster of white digitalis grown from your seeds, which light up a shady area in my Pembrokeshire country garden. Next year I hope to add some orange specimens, adding interest to the already abundant wild growing species. I am a foxglove aficionado and am always interested in what other colours are available.

Silvia Walton, by email

ED'S REPLY: A great place to see foxgloves in all their glory and variety is The Botanic Nursery in Wiltshire near Bath. Tel 07850 328756, www.thebotanicnursery.co.uk.

CULTIVARS

Time flies

I love the surprises I always find when reading your magazine all the way through. In your feature on aquilegias [issue 197, page 76] I read: 'Named last century for Charles Darwin's granddaughter, *Aquilegia vulgaris* var. *stellata* 'Nora Barlow',' and it took me somewhat aback. I just never think of myself as being born in the last century. Thanks for reminding me and giving me a good chuckle to start my day.

Suzanne Edney, by email

ED'S REPLY: And it's worse than that of course. Most of us were born in the last millennium.

WRITE TO US & WIN

The star letter wins a pair of Felco secateurs, offering superior cutting ability and ease of use. Choose between the ergonomically designed No 8 for larger hands or No 6 for smaller, both worth £59.99. For details of Felco's full range go to www.felco.com

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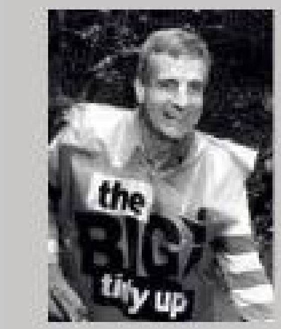
TALKING POINT

Phil Barton on the need for people to use their parks or risk losing them.

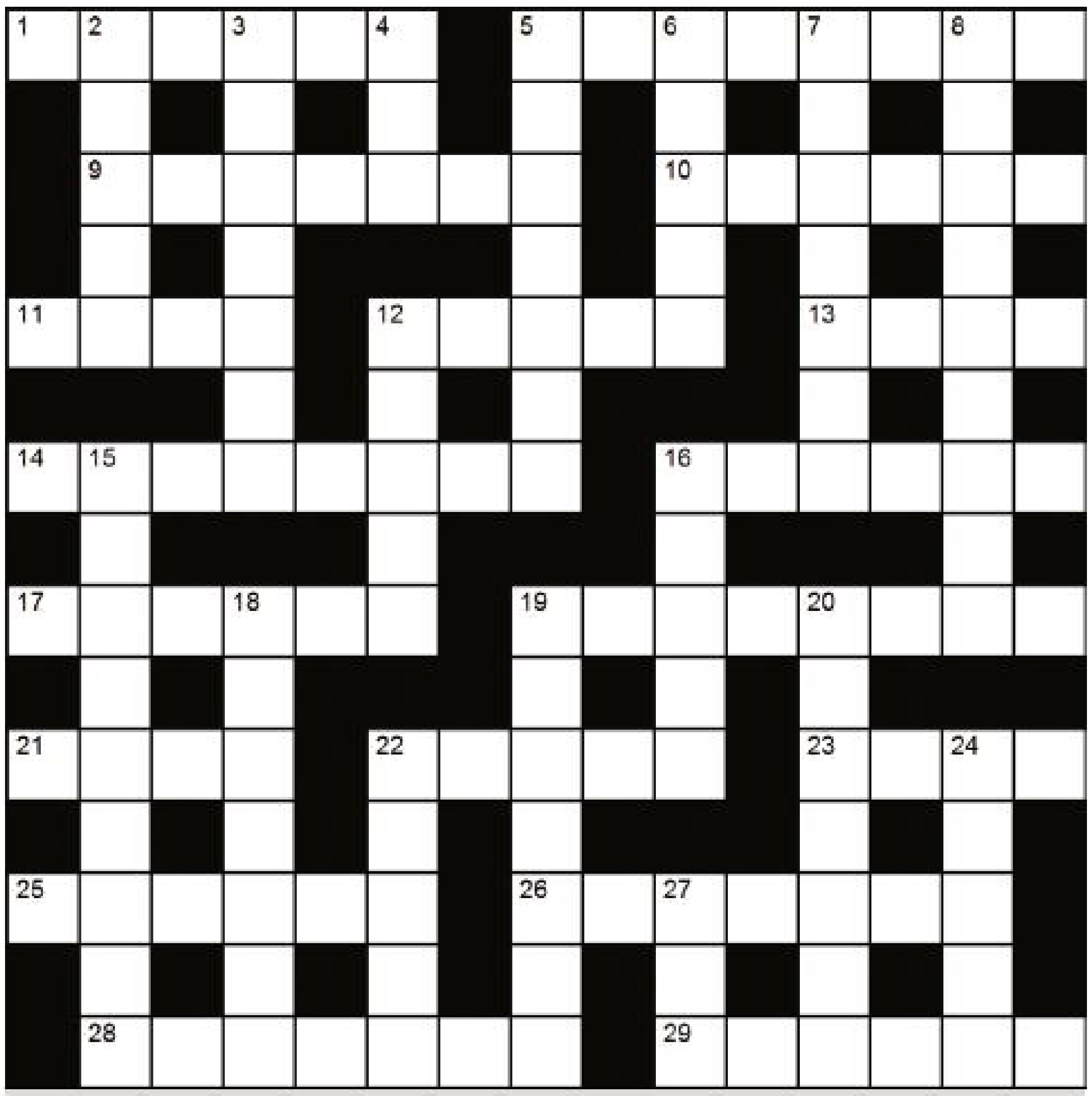


Phil Barton is the Chief Executive at Keep Britain Tidy, the environmental charity that runs the Green Flag Award.

Parks and gardens, like all public services, are under immense pressure from budget cuts. That is why it is more important than ever that people show how much they use and value green spaces. Last month, Keep Britain Tidy stepped in to save the Love Parks Week campaign following the closure of parks charity GreenSpace. By bringing together this flagship campaign with our Green Flag Awards programme, which celebrates more than 1,400 of the country's best parks and gardens, our goal is to encourage millions more people to visit their local green space. There is a huge body of research that shows parks are vital in maintaining healthy communities. So we need people to join us by getting out and using their local parks and gardens. If we fail to use them, we are in danger of losing them. For more information please visit www.keepbritaintidy.org/greenflagaward. Or to find out more about Love Parks Week, starting 27 July, visit www.loveparksweek.org.uk

- What's your view? Write to us by post or email (details above). We reserve the right to edit letters.

Crossword



ACROSS

1 Plant of *Impatiens* genus – basal distortion at start of May (6)

5 Golden rod genus (8)

9 Virginia takes this for a woodbine (7)

10 Collingwood, aka 'Cherry', plant collector/gardener partly pruning rambler (6)

11 Foerster's first lark about! (4)

12 eg a tomato plant's branch of flower (5)

13 Genus *Vitis* – there's a great one at Hampton Court Palace! (4)

14 Evergreen shrubs in barberry family – in Britain and in Asia (8)

16 To grow strongly, blossom (6)

17 Produced by fungi – propagated initially in rambling roses (6)

19 Using hose, say, possibly near twig (8)

21 See 4dn.

22 Space (so we hear) for the rhubarb genus (5)

23 England's 'garden' location in sunken terrain (4)

25 Healthy growth (6)

26 Deeply cut, as acer leaves are since I'd mutilated (7)

28 Monkey flower genus – mum is moving around middle of July (7)

29 Wood resembling mahogany – please change (6)

DOWN

2 Hollyhock genus in autumnal ceanothus (5)

3 Removed nut cases! (7)

4/21 Another name for *Hydrangea macrophylla* (7)

5 Mushrooms? Green vegetables, actually (7)

6 County location, in short, of Belvoir Castle (5)

7 Turn the soil – archaeological exploration finished? (3,4)

8 Location of Ireland's National Botanic Gardens – possibly enslaving! (9)

12 Cares for ten daffodils (just the ends) (5)

15 Genus of ferns – um, alpines perhaps? (9)

16 This dwarf tomato is a symbolic thing (5)

18 Colourful wriggler found in compost heap (3,4)

19 Beetle, feeding on plants we destroyed, lives! (7)

20 eg gathers moss from lawn? (5,2)

22 Concerning the countryside (5)

24 Describes plant with swellings – in flipping belladonna! (5)

27 Crisp, long-leaved lettuce (3)

SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

JULY'S SOLUTIONS

ACROSS: 1 Warmth **5** Cotinus **9** Gall **10** Marguerite **11** Aconitum **12** Pampas **14** Robin **16** Saturate **18** Marjoram **21** Besom **23** Sweet pea **25** Alcalthaea **27** Bean **28** Bearded **29** Maries.

DOWN: 2 Araucaria **3** Melon **4/22A** Hampton Court **5** Corymbs **6** Trumpet **7** Nor **8** Sitka **13** Morus **15** Bijou **17** Temperate **19** Rotated **20** Mustard **21** Bee balm **22** Celeb **24** Tuber **26** Ada.

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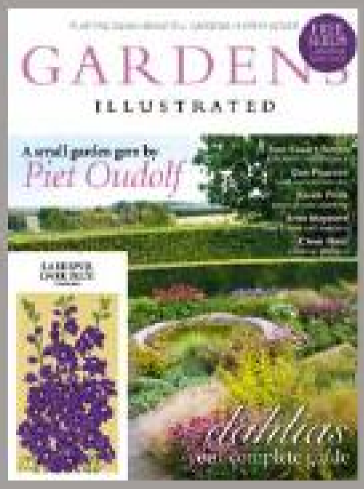

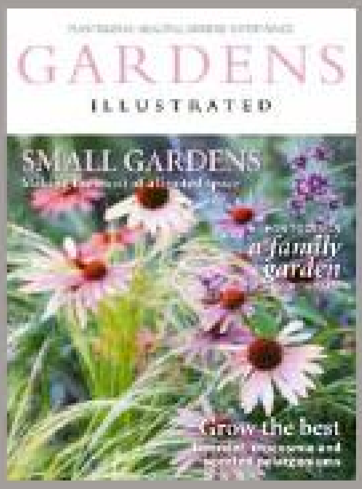

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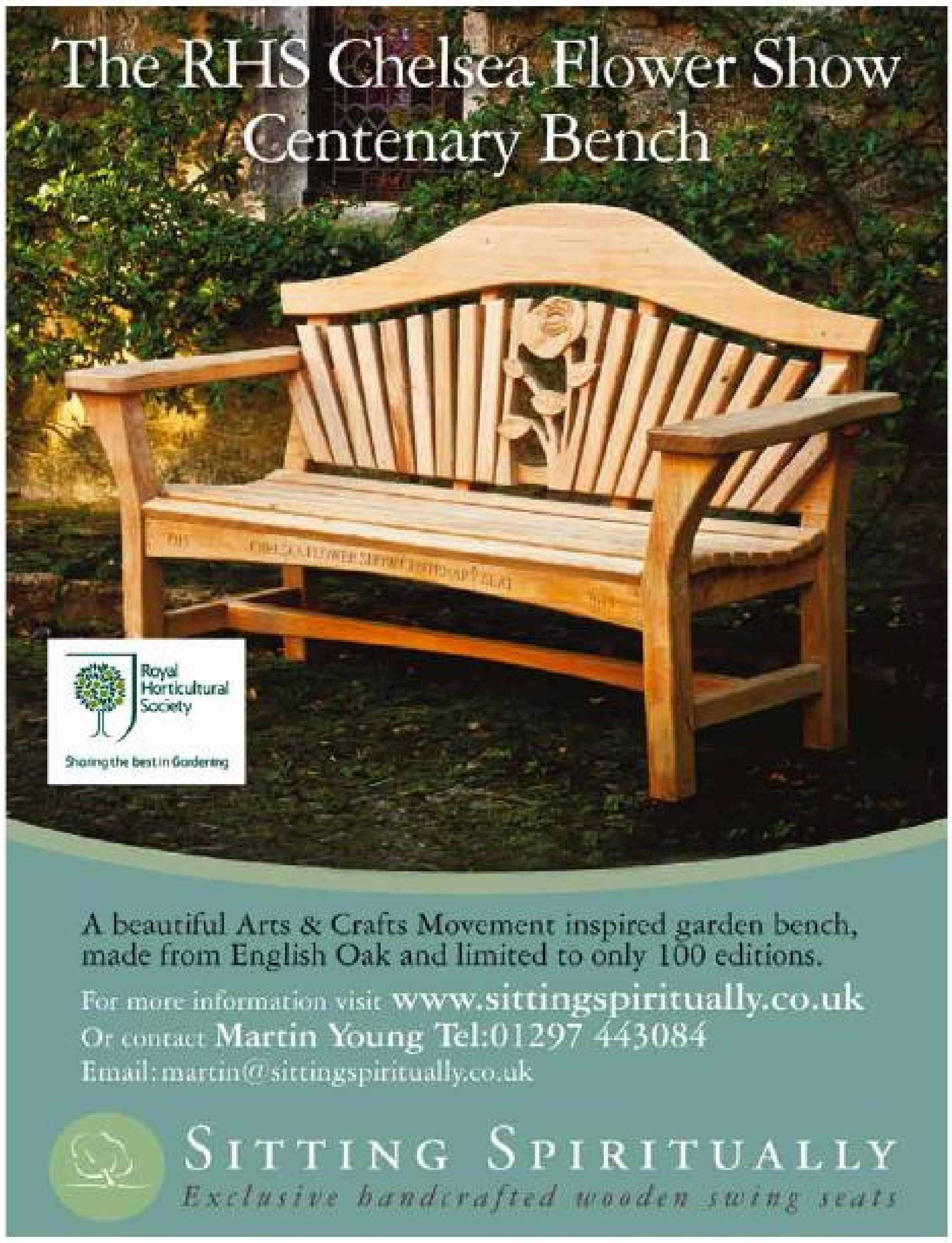

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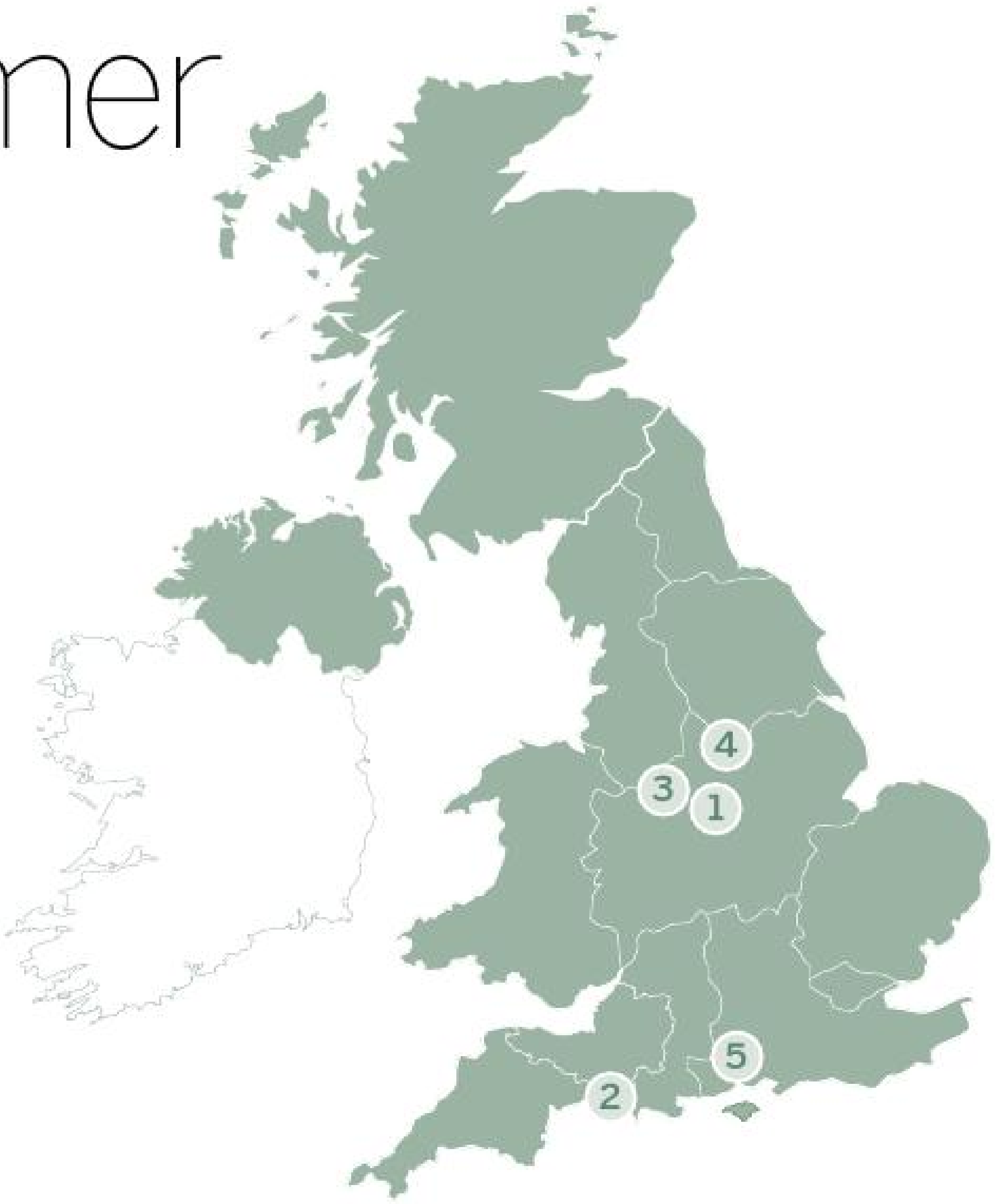

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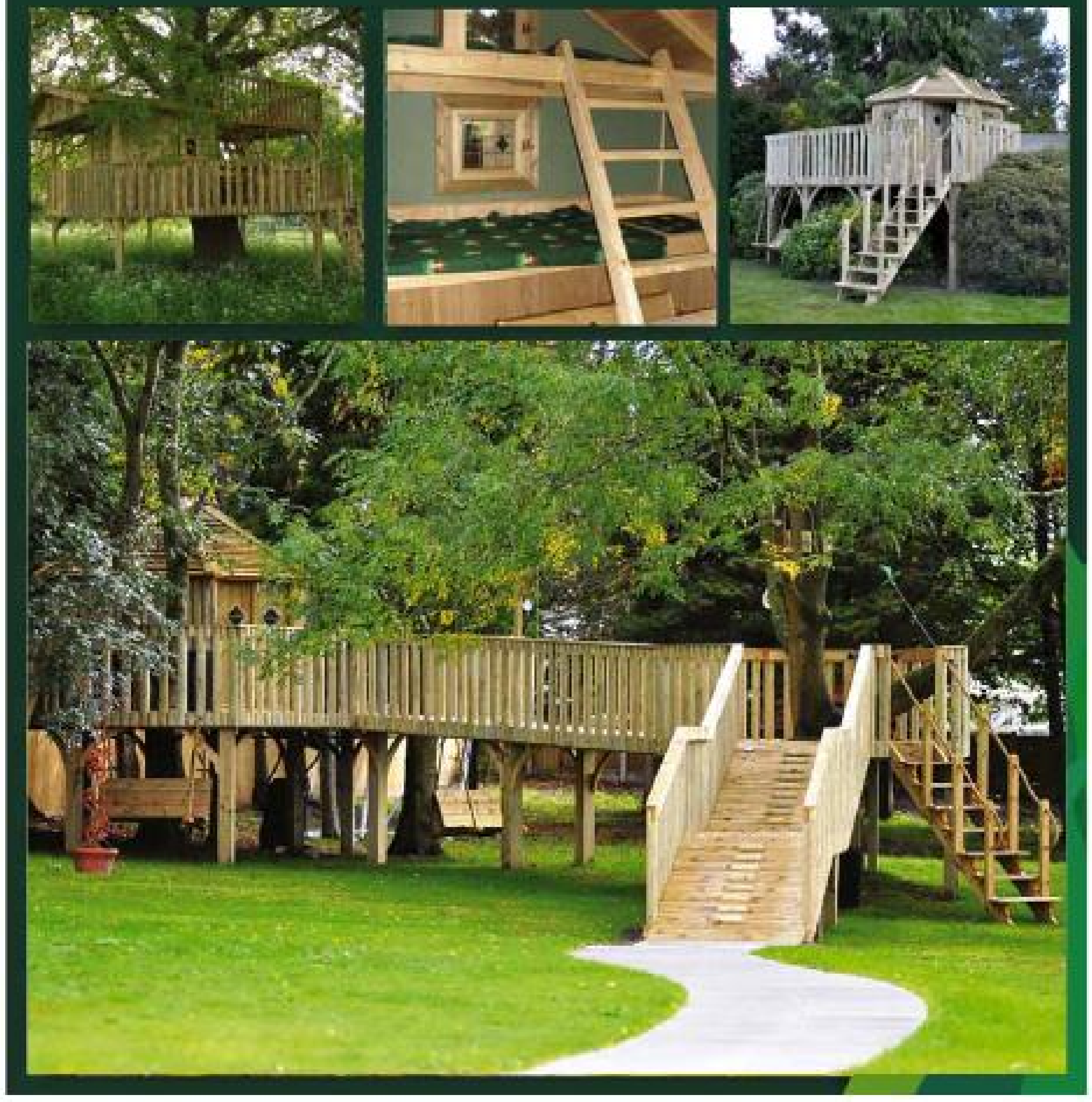

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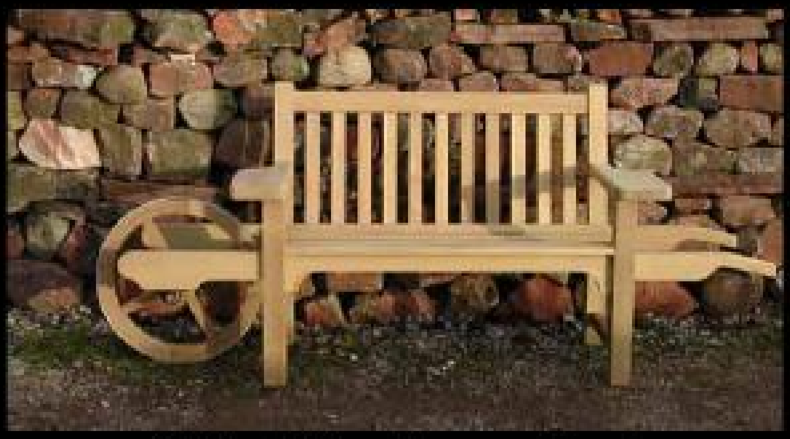

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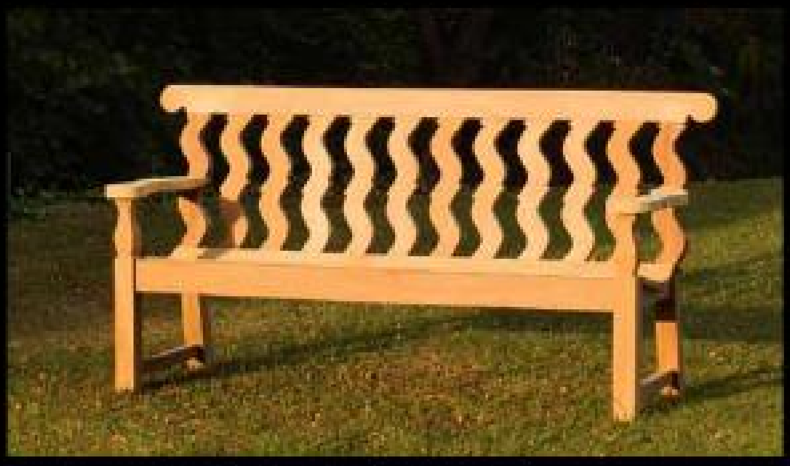

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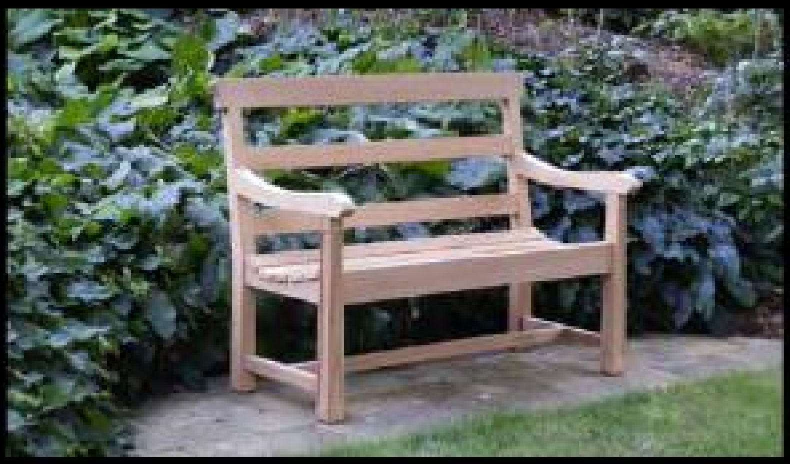

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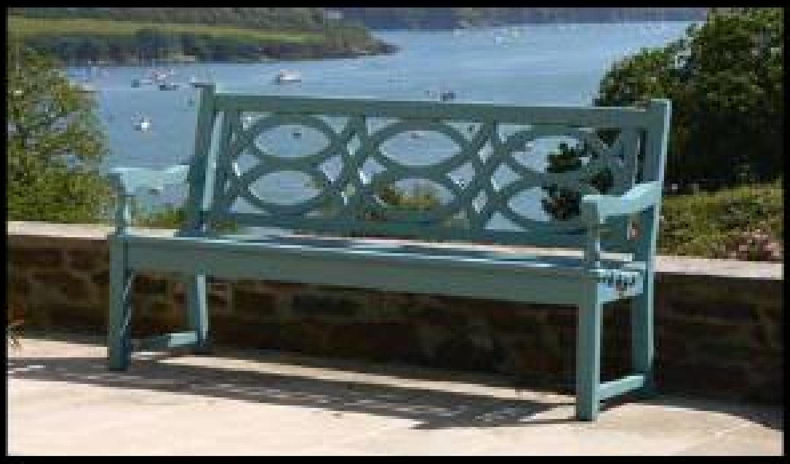

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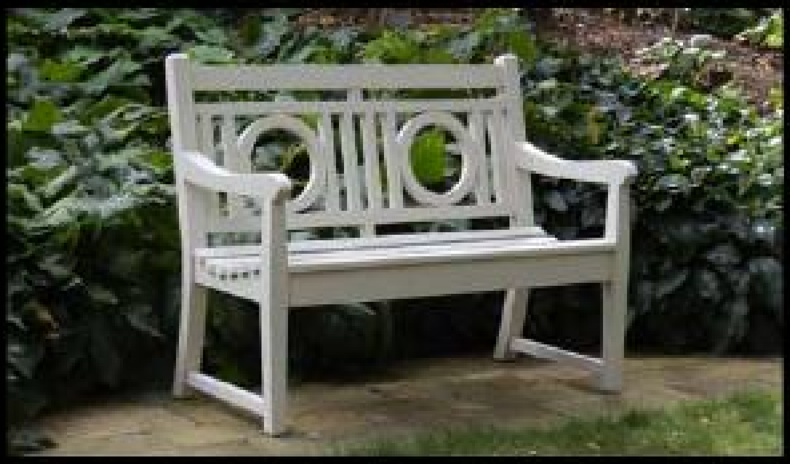

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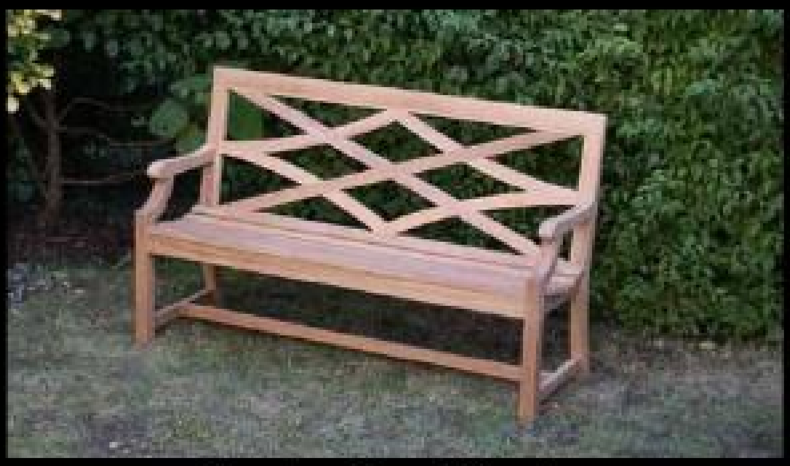

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SIBYLLE PIETRECK

Stark climes

On returning from Iceland, our columnist reels from the shock of the primitive

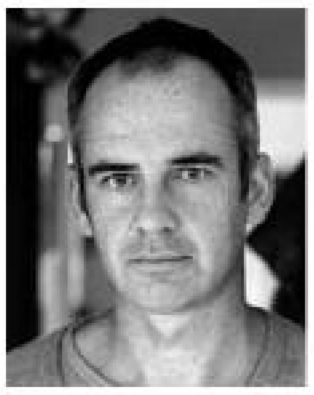
WORDS **FRANK RONAN** ILLUSTRATION **ANGELA HARDING**

Angela Harding

There is a good story that when the Bible was first read to Orcadians in the vernacular, even the most solemn of them fell about laughing at the incident in Genesis where Adam and Eve felt compelled to run and hide their nakedness among the trees of the Garden of Eden. For in all of Orkney the most substantial tree that was known, and therefore could be imagined, was a gooseberry bush, and a scant one at that, and you couldn't but laugh at an image of the shivering couple trying to conceal themselves behind it. Just back from the north of Iceland where I thought of that story more than once; where even a gooseberry bush would stand out lush against infinite prospects with nothing aspiring higher than lichen and moss; where miniaturised willows prostrate themselves in the cracks of lava. It is a shock to the system to be able to drive hour after hour through mile after mile of relentless beauty and all of it achieved without recourse to a single tree or a leaf that is bigger than your fingernail. Was this the primitive, newly erupted world in which Adam and Eve found themselves after the fall?

It is good for a gardener to spend time in places that are beyond gardening

The further north you go the simpler everything becomes. It is good for a gardener to spend time in places that are beyond gardening. I remember being shown around a garden in the extremes of Scotland where one had to stop in front of every struggling novelty and be asked to congratulate the owner on its being there at all: but all the time you were raising your eyes and thinking how much more beautiful everything was beyond the deer fence and how the deluded gardeners had wrecked their little acre with their obsession and that the pathetic phlox at your feet had no place in the grandeur of Sutherland.


Frank Ronan is a novelist who lives and gardens in Worcestershire

Then you fly down into the startling green of the English midlands, which is relative of course: I remember thinking how drab and brown this country was when I first travelled here from Ireland. You break though the cloud and see the abundance of trees loitering complacently across our landscape, and somehow the shock of returning to the familiar is greater than the shock of all that barren beauty just beneath the Arctic Circle. You begin to wonder at a thousand feet, dispassionately, how it would be if winters and summers went on getting colder at the rate they have been recently. It is not so long since we were leaving our dahlias out all year and buying a *Schefflera* as casually as we now buy snow shovels. What if the ice age came back and all our trees cracked and fossilised and all those fat fields turned to blue lichen, how long would we go on with our gardens and what would a garden be?

I can delight in those fantasies until I get through my own gate and then I don't want to think about this spot without the sheltering trees on the common or the clamouring demands of the neglected borders or the astonishing survivals of plants that have no right to be here at all. Perhaps someone else as unkind as me might stand on my terrace and think that it is all more beautiful beyond the hedge and that I have wrecked my little third of an acre with a solipsistic obsession.

I have lived in places where the wilderness came to the door and loved being there, but it never occurred to me to stay forever. I would love to go back and spend a winter in Arnarfjörður, which is possibly the most beautiful place in the world, and where there is nothing, and in winter there would not even be light except for a dull glimmer at midday. That would be an experience of the most profound kind. But Adam delved and so we come home to garden and we shape our little acres and want to stay forever. ☐

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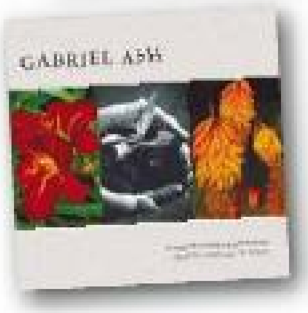

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